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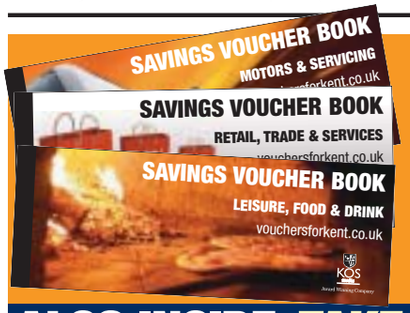

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300% RISE IN SWINE FLU CASES

'Don't panic, we can cope' says NHS

By JENNA PUDELEK

THE number of swine flu cases across Kent has soared by more than 300 per cent in the past week as the Government said the virus could no longer be contained.

Public health experts from the primary care trusts (PCTs) said a national flu line would be in place within two weeks to ensure the county's GPs do not get overwhelmed by patients with the H1N1 virus.

Andy Burnham, the Secretary of State for Health, announced the emergency response would now move into 'treatment phase' following a dramatic increase in cases across the country.

He said swine flu is spreading so rapidly that if it continues at its current rate there could be 100,000 new cases a day by the end of next month.

Dr Jackie Spiby, director of health improvement at NHS West Kent, told Kent on Sunday on Friday there were "well over 100 cases" across the county. The week before there were only 26 confirmed cases in Kent.

Instead of being swabbed and tested for swine flu, suspected cases will be diagnosed by their GP and people who have been in close contact with patients who test positive will no longer be given anti-viral treatment.

New swine flu cases will no longer be counted in a rolling total.

On Thursday, the last official breakdown of figures across the Kent showed there were 86 cases in total, with 51 in east Kent, 11 in Medway and 24 in west Kent.

PCTs in Kent have already set up anti-viral collection points so 'flu friends' can pick up treatment for the person with the virus.

Dr Spiby said: "The majority of collection points are at pharmacies because they are most accessible. We have a total of 40 in west Kent at the moment and the whole set will be up and running by next week."

She said the PCT was working closely with GP surgeries that say they can cope with cases at the moment.

Andrew Scott-Clark, director of public health at NHS Eastern and Coastal Kent, said: "We are expecting that individual GP practices should be able to cope. But this is an interim solution before the national flu line, which should be up and running the week after next."

Once the flu line has been set up, people who think they have swine flu will be asked to use it instead of calling their GP.

Mr Scott-Clark said: "The original strategy was to keep people away from GP surgeries as much as possible so that they can get on with normal business.

"So this is the interim solution before the flu line is up and running. In future weeks people should go direct to the flu line."

Asked if there was a danger that staffing levels at hospitals would be badly affected if lots of doctors and nurses caught the flu, he said: "All organisations have business continuity plans for this.

"Staff members who have close contact with people with suspected or known flu would be wearing protective clothing. We are protecting our own staff as much as possible"

The World Health Organisation last month announced swine flu was the first global pandemic in 41 years. The NHS has long been planning for an outbreak and has stockpiles

CONTINUED ON PAGE TWO

Picture: GARY MOYES

Weird and wonderful on show at Vic's place

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Kent today

TODAY: It is going to be mostly dry and increasingly bright with spells of sunshine. There is just the small risk of a shower during the morning. Moderate south-westerly winds. Max temp 19-22C (66-72F).
TONIGHT: Clear intervals, with the chance of a shower after midnight. Brisk winds. Min temp 12-15C (54-59F).

Around Britain

		C	F			C	F
Aberdeen	fair	20	68	London	showers	21	70
Belfast	fair	21	70	Liverpool	fair	23	73
Birmingham	showers	18	64	Manchester	showers	21	70
B'mouth	fair	21	70	Newcastle	showers	21	70
Bristol	fair	18	64	Norwich	fair	24	75
Cardiff	showers	19	66	Oxford	fair	22	72
Cork	showers	16	61	Southsea	fair	21	70
Edinburgh	cloudy	20	68	S'hampton	showers	21	70
Glasgow	fair	20	68	Southport	sun	–	–
Isle of Man	fair	18	64	Swansea	showers	18	64
Leeds	fair	21	70	Torquay	showers	18	64

Sun & moon

Sunrise	4.44am	Sunset	9.11pm	Lighting up times
Moonrise	6.31pm	Moonset	3.31am	9.15pm to 4.44am

High Tides

	today				tomorrow			
	HW	ht(m)	HW	ht(m)	HW	ht(m)	HW	ht(m)
Dover	10.44	5.9	23.04	5.9	11.27	6.1	23.46	6.0
Margate	11.40	4.2	–	–	00.12	4.3	12.23	4.3
St Mary's	04.12	4.7	16.34	4.9	04.57	4.8	17.15	5.1

Week ahead

monday — Heavy showers. max 20C min 12C
tuesday — A few showers. max 20C min 13C
wednesday — Heavy showers. max 20C min 12C
thursday — Mostly fine. max 20C min 12C
friday — The odd shower. max 21C min 13C
saturday — Mainly dry. max 21C min 13C

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County braced for swine flu pandemic

FROM FRONT PAGE

of anti-virals. Mr Scott-Clark said hospital trusts had worked out how many staff were needed to keep various departments open and would prioritise A&E and emergency surgery if necessary.

"If too many get critically ill, which we do not expect because the disease is mild in most cases, there are plans depending on the level of need," he said.

"We all have plans in place to deal with not only this beginning of the treatment phase, but also for when we get more cases.

"What we do not know is how many people will be seriously ill and we will manage that on a day-to-day basis. This is not out of the ordinary – we do it every winter."

On Friday, a 19-year-old man became the fourth person in the UK with swine flu to die. So far, the fatal cases have all had serious underlying health problems.

The majority have been mild and patients get better in about seven days. But there are concerns the virus could become more virulent. Dr Spiby said: "We know that in previous pandemics it has mutated.

"But we have no evidence of that from other countries that are already in their winter phase. The worry is that when we get to winter with people staying indoors more, and the kids back at school, the numbers will rise."

The virus is continuing to affect younger people. Five pupils at St Andrew's School in Rochester tested positive for swine flu this week. On Friday, eight students with swine flu, aged between 16 and 18, from the private Sevenoaks School were due to fly home from Romania. The pupils were part of a group of 19 who had arrived in the city of Iasi last Thursday as part of an annual exchange programme to work with disabled children. After they became ill they were put in isolation. The school did not say whether it is thought they caught the virus in the UK or Romania. The Health Protection Agency has advised schools to stay open and monitor the situation.

Mr Scott-Clark said: "We are advising people to go home and isolate themselves if they think they have flu, the same as before. There is an NHS website that has guidance for individuals to assess whether they have swine flu or not. People without access to that or who believe they have swine flu should call their GP."

If you have flu-like symptoms, go to www.nhs.co.uk or call your GP.

College's relief at funding reprieve

A HALF-demolished college that had its rebuilding project frozen over a lack of cash has won a Government reprieve.

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
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North West Kent College was one of more than 100 in the UK facing financial turmoil earlier this year when the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) admitted there was not enough money to go around.

Despite having already demolished some of the buildings at its Dartford campus, which it planned to replace with a £69 million development, the college was forced to suspend building work.

However, this week the LSC announced North West Kent would be one of just 13 priority cases in the country – and the only one in the South East – allowed to continue its programme, albeit with reduced costs.

Principal Malcolm Bell said: "I am absolutely delighted the community will benefit from the superb facilities we will be able to offer.

"The college has virtually doubled its full-time student numbers in the last five years and now we will be able to continue that growth. We look forward to construction starting at Dartford in the near future."

North West Kent College is also rebuilding its Gravesend campus, the first phase of which has already been completed and paid for. Phase two is expected to cost about £9m and include renovation of the technology and hospitality centres as well as the construction of an engineering block.

About £10m of public money was spent preparing the first phase at Dartford – which includes three new buildings – before the funding freeze was announced.

It is likely some older buildings earmarked for demolition in phase two will now be retained to help reduce costs.

Disappointing

While the LSC announcement was good news for North West Kent College, it was bad for three others in the county – Canterbury, Thanet and South Kent – that are also waiting on cash for redevelopment projects.

Canterbury College has already completed two phases of its programme at a cost of £50m, and is thought to be waiting on a similar amount before work can begin on the third.

Principal Alison Clarke said: "It's extremely disappointing not to be one of the 13 colleges to receive support from the £300m of capital funding announced in the budget.

"We will now focus on other options for the redevelopment of the remaining parts of the old campus building stock."

Thanet College has spent £4m of its own money preparing to relocate to new premises, although a spokesman said they recognised the urgent needs of the colleges selected.

South Thanet MP Stephen Ladyman described the news as "dreadful".

He told KOS Media: "The team at Thanet College have worked incredibly hard on this project and I have no doubt they will be broken-hearted.

"However, the programme continues and the next wave of funding will be prioritised from the autumn, for funding from 2011.

"We need to redouble our efforts to ensure Thanet College is included."

Building work at South Kent College's Ashford campus is also ready to begin, subject to receiving the £30m promised by the LSC.

A spokesman said it was not a surprise it was not one of the 13 colleges given the go-ahead on this occasion.

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Leisure tycoon's expert advice for faded coastal attraction

Duncan the Dragon's TV seaside SOS

By CHRIS MURPHY
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

FIRST it was Sir Alan Sugar's would-be entrepreneurs from The Apprentice trying to give Margate a makeover.

Now it's Dragons' Den businessman Duncan Bannatyne's turn to take on a struggling Ramsgate attraction.

In a new TV show called Save Our Seaside, he will look at what's gone wrong with once-popular seaside attractions up and down the country.

The Scottish tycoon has amassed a personal fortune of £320 million through his Bannatyne's chain of gyms, and is one of Britain's most successful entrepreneurs.

Now he is taking his expertise to the coast in the hope of restoring fading seaside tourist attractions for the Virgin1 series.

Since the 1960s many seaside attractions have fallen from favour, and the show aims to kick-start a campaign to revive the places that have suffered the most from cheap foreign holidays.

The show promises it will look beyond cosmetic makeovers and aim for the long-term renewal of Britain's traditional holiday attractions.

And the first on the agenda is the Grade-II listed Westcliff Leisure Park and Boating Pool in Ramsgate.

While the town has made the most of its stunning Royal harbour and growing café culture, the show concentrates on the attraction that needs a helping hand to return to the glory days.

In the show a 'family' visits to secretly film the attraction.

They then file a video report that Mr Bannatyne uses as the basis for a plan of action.

The Dragon then sets to work on everything from unbalanced books to rickety rides in the hope of putting faltering seaside attractions back on track.

But it's far from gloomy news for seaside towns. Domestic holiday bookings are up by 40 per cent on last year, proving foreign vacations are out and trendy 'stay-cations' are in.

The Kent tourism industry is in for a bumper summer, providing even more reason for attractions such as Westcliff Leisure Park to make sure holidaymakers leave with a smile.

A spokesman for the show said: "Duncan is on a mission to revitalise waning reputations, while investing his business expertise and helping to renew the seaside's fading grandeur in an ambitious assignment sure to put his commercial prowess to the test."

Mr Bannatyne will unveil the rejuvenated attractions in a star-studded grand finale, complete with community support.

Daniela Neumann of Virgin1 said: "We're excited to be working with Duncan on what we hope will be a series which will capture the imagination and encourage regeneration of our seaside attractions, which are a huge part of our heritage."

GREAT SCOT: Westcliff leisure park has already received a visit from Mr Bannatyne

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PC's isle funeral

THE funeral of a policeman killed as he attempted to divert traffic after a road accident will be held on Tuesday.

People are invited to pay their respects to PC Phillip Pratt by lining the streets as his horse-drawn hearse makes its way to Minster Bethel Congregational Church, on the Isle of Sheppey, at 11.30am. A statement from his family said: "We have been overwhelmed by the cards, letters and flowers received following Phill's death and thank everyone for their kindness."

PC Pratt died on the A249 near Sittingbourne on Sunday, June 14.

Rare raven return

RAVENS nesting on the white cliffs at Dover have become the first to breed in Kent for almost 120 years.

Crispin Scott, of the National Trust, said it was unusual to see ravens so far from their usual breeding ground. He said: "They normally breed in the west and north of the UK. It's a rare treat to see them here – and even more of a pleasure to see them breeding."

To view this, search 'Dave Lee' @ yourkenttv.co.uk

Comic Dave Lee has been raising money for disabled, sick and underprivileged children for years. His celebrity golf day will be held in October. Julie Maddocks met some of the stars involved, including Shaun Williamson

Business excellence celebrated at awards

BUSINESSES setting a shining example to others during the recession have been recognised at an awards ceremony.

The first ever Kent Excellence in Business Awards (KEiBA) – held on Thursday at Leeds Castle, near Maidstone – celebrated the achievement of 11 firms and individuals whittled down from almost 200 entries and 27 finalists.

Sittingbourne firm Denne Construction was one of the biggest winners of the night, picking up the award for large business of the year.

There were also prizes for Chatham Historic Dockyard (best leisure and tourism business) and the Aylesford-based Royal British Legion Industries (customer service and commitment).

The inaugural awards were staged and produced by Kent County Council, with cabinet member for economic development Cllr Kevin Lynes in attendance.

He said: "KEiBA is set to become the key business event of the year and these awards were an important opportunity for businesses to celebrate their success.

"It was fantastic to see almost 500 people at the awards and we're looking forward to supporting more businesses next year."

The award for young entrepreneur of the year went to Kate Austen, who in 2005 set up Podplus – part-sports store, part-injury clinic – in Ashford.

She was described by the judges as "passionate, committed, self-taught and focused", and had "all the attributes needed to succeed in business".

Ashford is also home to the winner of the entrepreneur of the year award, Gerard Coleman, whose L'Artisan du Chocolat product is now sold in upmarket food stores such Marks & Spencer as well as in celebrity chef Gordon Ramsay's restaurants.

Further recognition was given to the Tenterden-based English Wines Group (business of the year), Red Alert Telecare of Ashford (start-up business), Deal-based Home Service Complete Care (best social care) and the Hollingbourne-based Courtyard Studios (best creative industries).

Employer of the year was Holiday Extras near Hythe, while Cripps Harries Hall of Tunbridge Wells won the commitment to the community award.

All 11 winners received glass trophies designed by Kent artist Annie Ross.

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Millionaire is raffling off his luxury lifestyle

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

A MILLIONAIRE divorcee who is raffling off his huge country home along with a luxury boat and car has insisted his competition is legitimate.

City banker Andrew Paul is preparing to give up his £1.1 million retreat in Ightham, near Sevenoaks, in exchange for punters paying £20 a time for a shot at winning it.

And despite also throwing in a brand new Aston Martin DBS worth £160,000 and a £200,000 Sealine 35 Sport motorboat, the entrepreneur denied the competition was too good to be true.

He said: "I admit there are an awful lot of these types of competitions out there but I assure people this is no scam.

"It's all being run professionally, it was set up with a team of London-based lawyers and all the money paid into the competition is being held by a third-party bank.

"Someone will win and it will change their lives. Money doesn't buy happiness but it does make things a little easier when you don't have to worry about paying your mortgage or a bank loan.

"That's one of the reasons why we're also going to give the winner some extra help to pay for the upkeep of the house for a year.

"Then if they decide they can't afford it after that, at least they have some assets to sell."

Mr Paul moved to Sevenoaks from Tokyo, Japan, in 2004 and despite "loving" his house said that he wanted a clean break following his divorce.

Pictures: PAUL WEBB

NEW LIFE: Andrew Paul, inset, is offering his house, car and motorboat in a raffle

He stands to rake in a £2.5m profit from the competition if all 200,000 tickets are sold.

Mr Paul said: "I wanted to give somebody the opportunity to taste a different side of life. I've been very lucky in what I've done and achieved and what the money I have made has allowed me to do, but my priorities have changed now.

"The house is just too big for me now so I want to make a fresh start with my little boy and refocus. I want to change my lifestyle.

"What happens after the competition is all a bit up in the air at the moment. It depends how well it goes, but the interest so far has been colossal and it may be that I consider turning it into a commercial venture."

The winner of the competition – details of which can be found at www.winanewlife.com – can take £1m in cash as an alternative to the prizes.

However, the prizes offered are dependant on how many tickets are sold. If all 200,000 are snapped up then all the prizes will be given away.

But if less than 150,000 are sold, Mr Paul can choose to keep the house, boat and car and offer a cash prize as a percentage of the ticket sales.

He said: "News of this competition has gone around the world, including this week in the New York Times and the LA Times. So I'm confident the minimum amount will be sold, and anything more than 150,000 will be a bonus."

The competition closes at 9am on Wednesday, August 19.

New medieval map

A HUSBAND and wife team have recreated a medieval world map as part of the £2 million restoration of Dover Castle's keep.

According to English Heritage, this is the first serious modern attempt to create such a piece and experts have called it "highly authentic".

Phil and Tamara Pleasant from Worcester crafted the map on calfskin using authentic materials, including ink made of oak galls and paint ground from natural pigments and 23.5 carat gold leaf.

Number plate theft

KENT Police have launched an initiative to tackle number plate thefts.

Around 34,000 tamper-proof screws are to be distributed to 15 car dealerships in north Kent, Canterbury, Ashford, Maidstone, Gillingham and Sittingbourne.

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Lapland is the hot ticket for summer

SCORCHING summer temperatures have done little to slow ticket sales for the return of a popular Christmas attraction.

Despite it being the hottest week of the year, parents are still planning for the festive season and ensuring their children get the chance to visit Santa within the surroundings of Lapland UK's winter wonderland.

Tickets for the attraction on the Bewl Water estate near Lamberhurst went on sale two months ago and about 8,000 have already been snapped up.

Founder and managing director Mike Battle said: "There was an initial rush to buy them at the start because there were people who wanted to go on specific dates, but we've sold tickets steadily every day since.

"It's remarkable that despite temperatures hitting 30 degrees, parents' minds are still on Christmas and that's really encouraging.

"It's not that surprising though because for many, a child's belief in Father Christmas is fantastically important. I think that's what went wrong with the 'Crapland' attraction in the New Forest. If you get it right then the parents will love you, but if you ruin Christmas for their kids then they'll probably want to kill you."

As well as being able to meet Father Christmas in his snowy forest home, parents and their children who visit the attraction will also be able to go ice-skating, meet husky dogs and reindeer and join in other activities.

SEASONAL ATTRACTION: Approximately 8,000 tickets have already been snapped up to visit Lapland UK this winter

A former City trader who sank more than £3 million of his own cash into the venture, Mr Battle said Lapland UK was improving year-on-year: "We came up with this idea in 2007 because unless you have the money to take your children to the real Lapland, there's nowhere similar you can go.

"After that Christmas we evaluated things and although people told us it was very good, there was still room for improvement. It's an evolution now rather than a revolution."

Visit www.laplanduk.co.uk for details.

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Star's shooting away our preconceptions

By JENNA PUDELEK
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STUFFED animals flying out of a Victorian contraption and a Siamese serpent are among the exhibits in a surreal show by the comedian-turned-curator Vic Reeves.

In The Natural History of Kent and Sussex Through My Binoculars, which opened yesterday at the Tunbridge Wells Museum and Art Gallery, the purveyor of the bizarre is leaving the meaning of it all up to visitors.

Reeves, who lives in Charing near Ashford with his wife Nancy Sorrell and their twins, has created six new paintings for the show that he has combined with objects and artefacts from the museum's collection.

Asked whether the pictures were produced in response to what he found rifling through museum's wide-ranging archives, he said: "It was a bit of both really, after I did the pictures I picked some other things as well.

"I'm putting up shelves under each painting and there will be objects that will link directly or indirectly with the painting.

"People can make their own links. People spend a lot of time wanting to be told what to think about something. I'm assuming they will want to know what it is all about, but my lips are keeping firmly shut."

The 50-year-old is probably most famous for Shooting Stars, the BBC TV comedy quiz show he presented along with Bob Mortimer in the 1990s and which is due to make a comeback this August.

But the keen birdwatcher and prolific artist – he is publishing a book filled with 260 of his illustrations later this year – has exhibited his paintings and drawings at several commercial galleries.

Reeves, who said his artistic life has worked alongside his comedy throughout his career, described some of the objects he chose. "I suppose I'm fond of stuffed animals and birds, as well as the live ones," he said.

UNUSUAL: Vic Reeves' work is being exhibited at Tunbridge Wells Museum, Cllr James Scholes was among those eager for a peek

"All that Victoriana, they would stuff anything they saw… I've always been interested in insects in museums since I was young. That was the first thing I looked for."

As he spoke to Kent on Sunday this week Reeves was busy setting up the show. He said: "They (the stuffed animals) are all flying out of a Victorian bath chair. They hit the ground and turn into humming birds that spread out coming together.

"I was working out how it would fit together nine months ago and now I'm putting it all into place."

Asked what kind of reaction he wanted, he said: "Probably tearing people away from the obvious.

"I would think there will be a different audience there, but what they will think I do not know. It'll be interesting to see."

Quizzed over the use of stormy clouds and threatening skies, he said: "I got some new acrylic sprays and I was messing about with it and I and thought it made nice clouds and I've got a bit of a thing about clouds.

"One of the great things about art is that you can see whatever you want to see and think whatever you want about it."

One painting shows a serpent joined in the middle with two heads with two sets of human eyes and lips. The work was inspired by an object in the museum's collection.

He said: "It [the show] is quite random there is nothing particularly that ties it, but I suppose the general theme could be ways of looking at things."

Reeves came straight to the museum after filming Shooting Stars last weekend and said it was not that big a leap in the type of material he was dealing with.

Is he hoping to attract a different and perhaps younger audience to the museum? He added: "I don't know who'll see it, museum goers, tourists…

"There was a lady outside this morning who said, 'can I bring my kids or is it adult themed' and I said there is nothing particularly adult or dodgy."

The show will run until August 29.

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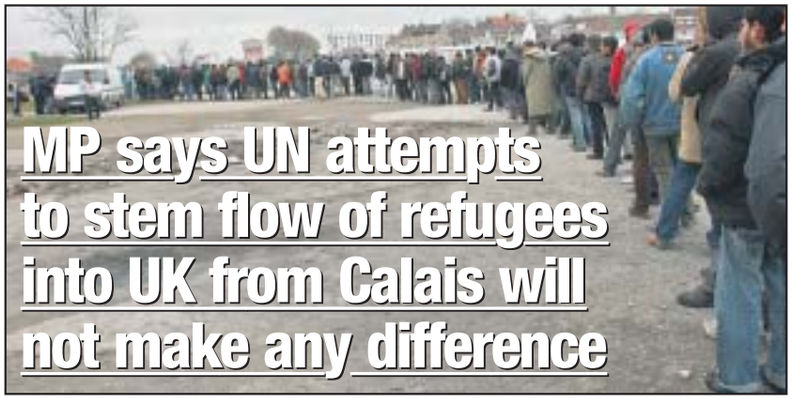
By CHRIS MURPHY
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk



MP says UN attempts to stem flow of refugees into UK from Calais will not make any difference

QUEUEING UP: The UN refugee agency is at Calais full time offering advice to refugees

THE United Nations' new refugee centre in Calais will do little to stop would-be migrants flocking to the port in the hope of getting to Kent.

That's the view of Ashford MP and shadow immigration minister, Damian Green.

The United Nations' refugee agency UNHCR will now be at the French port full time to help hundreds of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers living in the squalor of what has become known as 'the Jungle'.

The French Government has already revealed plans to level the area and clamp down on illegal migrants, but the UN wanted to go one step further.

The UNHCR pulled out of the port in 2002 after the notorious Sangatte centre was finally closed down – but ironically there are still talks between the French and British governments over a new holding centre inside the UK zone at the docks.

They both say this would allow them to send illegal immigrants back to their home nations much more easily.

Now UN officials have moved back in with the sole purpose of providing information to the 1,500 migrants insisting on living around the area.

Some of that advice will include details of the asylum policy in the UK.

They are informed clearly that if they arrived in the UK illegally and are caught, they could face a return to the Continent or to their country of origin, unless granted asylum.

The UNHCR describes relations between the foreigners and the people of Calais as "tense".

Mr Green said he does not believe the UN centre will encourage migrants to dash to Calais in even greater numbers – but he doubts it will do any good either.

He told Kent on Sunday: "I wish them well, but I don't think it will solve the problem.

"It will only work if people from all over the world realised Britain's borders were secure. That is what will stop people gathering at Calais.

"I am sure the UNHCR will give them good advice and try to persuade them to go back, but I think that before they start their journey they need to know they are not going to get into Britain.

"This is because once they come halfway across the world to the French coast it's unlikely they won't give up from there.

"The message needs to go out that Britain's borders are difficult to penetrate, but unfortunately for the past 10 years, Britain's borders have been extremely easy to penetrate which is why so many use the route into Kent to get here.

"I don't think the UNHCR will encourage more to try. They have all the best motives and I hope they do some good but I just don't think it will make much difference."

The UK Borders Agency said: "Last year alone UK Border Agency staff at our French and Belgium controls, not only searched more than one million lorries but also stopped 28,000 attempts to cross the Channel illegally.

"The message is clear that the only way to live and work in France and the UK is by legal routes.

"Working alongside our French colleagues, we will continue to offer support and humanitarian assistance to those who genuinely need it, but if people are not in need of protection we expect them to return home."

Raw deal for job hunters?

JOBSEEKERS face being frozen out by the Government as they struggle to find work during the recession.

According to the Conservatives, the four months it will take for the New Deal employment training programme to be replaced by the 'flexible New Deal' will lead to jobless people missing out on help when they need it most.

Accusation

However, the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) denies the changeover of the scheme – currently run in Kent by TBG Learning – will lead to gaps in provision.

The Tories made the accusation following the announcement that from Monday, June 29, New Deal providers across the country will no longer accept referrals.

This is despite its replacement programme not due to come in until October.

Shadow work and pensions secretary Theresa May said: "It is outrageous that when Britain is facing the highest levels of unemployment in decades, the Government is cutting the help available to people trying to get back into work."

The Kent, Surrey and Sussex region is one of 14 in Britain that will be affected by the changeover, with the flexible New Deal contracts expected to be awarded this month.

In Kent, the preferred bidders are Max Employment UK Ltd and Skills Training UK.

A DWP spokesman said: "We're increasing the support we are giving people and there are no gaps in provision.

"For the long-term unemployed the flexible New Deal will give tailor-made support, while we will guarantee a job or work-focused training to all young people out of work for a year or more."

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1,000 jobs boost with construction of depot

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

AROUND 1,000 jobs are being created with the building of a massive Morrisons distribution depot.

It will be built in Sittingbourne and should be open for business by the autumn, the supermarket giant said.

The 920,000 sq ft complex will supply up to 65 Morrisons stores and be a great help to local suppliers who will not have to travel so far.

The company said the site will significantly reduce the number of road miles travelled, improve transport efficiency and reduce Morrisons' carbon footprint.

It estimates it will result in almost 14 million fewer miles being travelled per annum, equivalent to 2.6m kg of CO2 per year.

A range of high-tech environmental technologies are proposed to be incorporated in the development.

These will include a system for rain water harvesting, and low water use appliances, energy-efficient lighting and a cutting-edge 'resource recovery' unit, where cardboard, polythene and polystyrene will be recycled from supplier packaging.

The company said almost 1,000 jobs will be created in managerial, administrative, warehouse, truck and LGV driving, fleet engineer and catering roles.

Recruitment will take place for approximately 600 vacancies in the coming months.

Morrisons logistics director Neal Austin said: "This new facility will enable us to better service our growing business – so that we can continue to deliver exceptional service to our customers.

"We hope this will be a great boost to the local economy with 1,000 jobs being created. I am confident our move to Sittingbourne will further help to regenerate the local area."

The site will comprise of two warehouses, which Morrisons says will service up to two million cases of produce, chilled foods, bread and groceries each week.

The company said: "The network was working close to its capacity. A big regional distribution centre in the South East enables us to lower capacity in the rest of the business.

"It's not a question of replacing work, but easing some of the stress in the rest of the system."

A MAN was rushed to hospital after he suffered burns when a nail bar caught fire in Maidstone town centre.

Emergency services were called to Sunrise Nails, at about 4pm on Wednesday, after a fire broke out in the back room of the ground floor.

A Kent Ambulance spokesman confirmed a 47-year-old man had suffered burns to his legs, arms and back, and had been taken to Maidstone Hospital as a "main priority".

Four Kent Fire and Rescue Service pumps attended the scene and had extinguished the flames within an hour. An investigation into how the fire started has been launched.

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NO SALE: Stone's artwork was not sold

Killer's art put on eBay gets no bids

AN OBSCENE cartoon said to be by Chillenden killer Michael Stone has failed to sell on the US version of internet auction site eBay.

The piece of artwork was listed for 99 cents, but despite the low price it didn't attract a single bid.

It was placed online by a man called Alexander Baron who runs the ismichaelstoneguilty website.

Baron believes drug-addict Stone was wrongly jailed for the 1997 killing of Lin Russell and her young daughter Megan as they walked home near Chillenden.

Her other daughter Josie survived the brutal assault.

Baron said wasn't worried it didn't sell.

He said: "I didn't really expect it to, but it keeps the case in the public eye."

His £10,000 'competition' to find a photograph placing Stone somewhere other than the murder scene is still running.

The contest and the cartoon were criticised by Dr Shaun Russell, who now lives in Wales. He said it was distressing, but not surprising, that someone still claims the killer of his wife and daughter is innocent.

The details for the cartoon read on eBay: "In 1997, Maidstone man Michael Stone was fitted up for a notorious double homicide known as the Chillenden Murders.

"You can read the sordid details here," and it lists his website.

Cow is not i-moo-vable

A COW had to be winched to safety through the roof of a milking shed after falling down the side of a gantry.

Farmer Godfrey Palmer, of Amhurst Court Farm in Egerton, near Ashford, dialled 999 on Tuesday after the animal took a tumble several hours earlier.

An animal rescue unit from Faversham attended the scene along with regular fire crews from the same station, as well as Ashford.

Ashford station manager Lee Rose said: "There was a lot of the milking machinery above its head making it difficult for the cow to move itself out of the space. The cow did not seem distressed, but was clearly rather shocked."

Fire crews had to remove part of the roof and, after attaching strops around its body, winched it to safety with a crane.

Claire revels in chance to show evil side

By CHRIS MURPHY
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

TELEVISION star Claire Sweeney has avoided any major scandal since she hit the big time, which is why she relishes playing the baddie.

She will be in Bromley again this year starring in panto, despite being stunned by the boos last Christmas when she first walked on a stage as the Wicked Queen. She is returning to the Churchill Theatre, this time to play a wicked fairy in Sleeping Beauty.

"It's a great part to play," she said while lounging on the sofa of her London home.

"I am an actress and I love great parts. The baddie is always the best part to play. I love playing an evil character as it's a chance to flex my acting skills. You get to wear glamorous dresses, sing great songs and be totally evil. There is no secret agenda there."

Sweeney has always been the squeaky clean TV presenter and stage star in shows like Guys 'n' Dolls. She has also appeared in Brookside twice as Lindsey Corkhill, plus a myriad of other programmes.

Honoured

So did the boos and hisses of a panto audience suddenly strike a chord?

She said: "I quite liked it actually. When I walked on playing a baddie and got all the boos, I really did think 'ooh' and wonder about it. But I quite enjoy it, it's good fun."

The Liverpool-born star was already performing and singing at 14. Ironically she was once turned down for a part in Chicago because she was too young, but was later to be a major hit in the West End production.

Sweeney was runner-up in celebrity Big Brother in 2001, and has been critical of house mates in the public shows.

Her entire career has been on stage and television, but she would love to get into movies if the right one comes along.

BOO HISS: Actress Claire Sweeney will be playing a wicked fairy in Sleeping Beauty

She said: "I have not done any movies. The opportunities have never arisen to be honest. I am very focused on television and theatre."

The constant takes and retakes is something many actors moan about. Sweeney said: "It's pretty much the same in television as well, it's very slow. That's the thing I love about theatre. It's instantaneous and you know if people like you or not straight away."

She has performed several times at the Churchill, and said she is delighted to be returning to Bromley: "I feel a real affinity with the Churchill, and I feel honoured to be working there this Christmas."

Her co-star will be comedian Joe Pasquale, from Higham.

Sleeping Beauty runs from December 4 to January 10. Tickets are from 0870 0606620 or www.ambassadortickets.com/bromley.

'Inflammable' cleaning woman in airport arrest

IT COULD well have been a case of Osama bin Scrubbin' when a woman from Kent tried to board a plane reeking of pungent fumes.

Security stuff were sent reeling by the smell from the woman, who was later found to have soaked herself in cleaning fluids.

Worried she was in a position to turn herself into a human torch once on board the plane, the Russian woman, with an unidentified home in Kent, was taken aside.

Stunned airport workers found she had a cleaning obsession, and had on clothes which had been doused in cleaning fluids. The chemicals turned out to be non-inflammable.

She was also apparently carrying several cigarette lighters, and even a white powder, which again turned out to be harmless.

The police source said: "It's easy to see why alarm bells started ringing, but it all turned out to be perfectly innocent in the end."

She was heading for a flight to Lithuania.

In a statement, Essex Police said: "Police arrested a 51-year-old woman from Kent at Stansted Airport after she was found to be carrying several items which caused concern, namely a quantity of white powder and tissues soaked in a liquid.

"Tests established the powder was sodium carbonate, for cleaning, and the liquid in the tissues was domestic cleaning fluid. The crystals and liquid were not inflammable or illegal.

Attention

"There will be no further action against the woman. She has been advised about carrying such items on flights."

A spokesman for Stansted said: "Our security officers detained the woman and the police then took over. They satisfied themselves and the woman was released.

"There was no risk there, but her condition was slightly unusual. The smell was very strong which is what drew the attention. There was nothing in her behaviour."

Night-time curfew for dole fraudster

A BENEFITS cheat who falsely claimed more than £4,500 has been given a three-month curfew order.

John Barnes, 32, of Nine Elms Grove, Gravesend, admitted fraud at Dartford Magistrates Court after failing to tell Gravesham Borough Council and the Department for Work and Pensions his partner was living with him and supporting him.

Barnes, who claimed a total of £4,573 in housing, council tax and income support benefits, was ordered by magistrates to pay the money back and pay £357 in court costs.

Barnes, who said he was "ashamed" of what he had done, will be tagged and must remain indoors at his home between 9pm-4am every day.

If he breaks his curfew the court can impose a more severe punishment.

Moroccan police to quiz Securitas robbery suspect

A CAGE fighter accused of plotting the £53 million Securitas robbery is to be questioned in Morocco at the request of Kent Police.

Lee Murray, 29, from Sidcup, is charged with conspiracy to rob, conspiracy to kidnap and conspiracy to possess firearms in connection with the raid in Tonbridge, in February, 2006.

A Moroccan court ruled last week that Murray would not be extradited to the UK because he has joint British and Moroccan nationality.

Now Kent Police have asked their Moroccan counterparts to carry out an investigation on their behalf.

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Police scupper speedboat gang caught with £1.5m cocaine haul

DRUG smugglers are facing a combined prison sentence of 44 years for trafficking £1.5 million of cocaine into Kent using inflatable speedboats, ***writes Jenna Pudelek***.

The five men were arrested after a dramatic confrontation with police on Hythe beach, which saw some of them try to escape by swimming out to sea.

They were sentenced at Canterbury Crown Court on Wednesday.

Ringleader Glen Johnson, 32, a professional fighter from Hampshire, was sentenced to nine years for conspiring to supply controlled drugs. The court heard he had a string of 17 previous convictions for crimes including kidnap.

His brother Ronnie Johnson, 21, also from Hampshire, was given eight years for the same offence.

Kym Farid, 30, unemployed and from Surrey, and Harvon Davies, 24, from Croydon, both received a nine-year prison sentence for the crime.

Josiah Johnson, 21, from Hampshire, a cousin of the Johnson brothers, was the only gang member to plead not guilty. He was convicted and given a nine-year prison sentence.

The investigation was sparked after the Coastguard spotted two people trying to paddle an inflatable boat across the Channel in August, 2008.

French police picked up the boat and handed the two men, the Johnson brothers, over to officers at Dover docks. They claimed they had been drinking alcohol before deciding to take the boat out to sea, but were swept into the busy shipping lane.

BEACHED: (Left to right) Brothers Glen and Ronnie Johnson and their cousin Josiah were part of the gang using boats to bring in cocaine

On September 13, last year, at 4am, police were called to Hythe beach after reports that an inflatable boat had come ashore.

Serious

Glen Johnson, who was seen swimming in the sea after getting rid of a black dry suit, was arrested along with his brother Ronnie, who was also in a dry suit and hiding behind rocks on the beach.

Their cousin Josiah was arrested as he tried to hide in the water near some rocks, and Farid was running along the beach at the time.

A car officers spotted at the seafront sped away from the scene, but was later stopped.

Police found a black holdall with 12 packages wrapped in brown tape and a smaller cylinder packet containing nearly 13 kilos of cocaine.

Det Insp Eddie Fox, from the serious organised crime unit led the investigation.

He said: "The five men sentenced were part of a significant organised crime group that was probably one of the most prolific gangs involved in this type of criminality.

"Throughout the investigation they lied and were unco-operative when interviewed.

"In dismantling this group and bringing these men to justice, we have probably saved lives."

He said the investigation had taken him and his team of detectives across Kent, Hampshire, Surrey, London, Middlesex, Essex and northern France.

As he sentenced the gang, Recorder Peter Judge Morgan said: "You all played a part in a sophisticated operation. There is no doubt that the offence is so serious that only an immediate sentence of imprisonment is justified. Although you all played different roles in the operation, you were all critical to it."

Since the investigation, Kent Police has formed an alliance with other forces in the South East to improve the protection of the region's coastline and waterways through Project Kraken.

By JENNA PUDELEK
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Women explain the pain climate change is causing communities in poverty

THE DEVASTATING effects of climate change are already destroying the lives of people in some of the world's poorest countries.

Shorbanu Khutun, a survivor of Cyclone Aila from Gabura in Bangladesh, and Constance Okollet, a mother from the Tororo region of Uganda, spoke to Kent on Sunday about how their communities have been affected by global warming.

The two women will be among the speakers at an event tomorrow organised by Oxfam in Calverley Park, Tunbridge Wells, to raise awareness about climate change.

If we fail to act on climate change now temperatures in Kent could soar by 10C by 2080, according to the latest Government calculations.

There would be more heatwaves, droughts and flooding. But these kinds of extreme weather conditions are already affecting countries like Uganda and Bangladesh.

Mrs Okollet, a community worker, said access to clean water in Uganda is a major problem and in her village of Asinget there is only one borehole serving 1,600 people.

"Climate change is bad because when it comes to drought all crops dry up. For the last two months there has been a lot of sunshine that has led to poor harvest, hunger and malnutrition. When it comes to floods, crops and homes break down."

The area's subsistence farmers produce crops including maize, bananas, potatoes, soya beans and sorghum.

"There is noticeable change in seasons – more droughts then erratic, destructive rains that lead to floods.

"The food production is very low and some people in my village fail to get a day's food at all."

The 45-year-old, who lives in a country where half the population is below the international poverty line, said that over the past two months droughts had caused crops to dry up.

Flooding is also a problem, she said: "In 2007 we had a heavy flood which we shall never easily recover from. Just recently in April mini-floods affected crops.

"All the crops are washed away and if not, they are covered by water and soil, which makes them rot."

The World Development Movement claims if energy giant E.ON gets approval to build a new coal-fired power station at Kingsnorth it could be responsible for 100,000 more people in the developing world losing their water supply in dry seasons.

Help

Mrs Okollet thought rich countries like the UK should be doing more to stop climate change: "This problem of unpredictable season changes is caused by overseas rich countries and that for them they can help their people when there is a problem."

Bangladesh is more exposed to the effects of global warming than any other country in the world.

Cyclone Aila struck in May and left Mrs Khatun, 38, her four children and her parents homeless: "I saw water everywhere coming towards us and people in boats escaping. Soon the water trapped us and we had to climb onto our roof. The walls collapsed, so then we were floating on the roof."

Across the country, more than 200 people were killed and more than 500,000 left homeless.

Mra Khatun is among around 6,000 families living on the one street in the village left above water and using tarpaulin for shelter.

The free Climate Hearing at the Calverley Park bandstand is at 3pm.

BLEAK: Children hide from the wind in their temporary shelter as the floodwater creeps up in Satkhira, Bangladesh, after Cyclone Aila

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Working smarter will help NHS meet challenges of a leaner future, says expert

'We must learn to innovate'

QUALITY AGENDA: Prof William Roche

THE economic downturn will break inertia in the NHS and force healthcare professionals to be innovative, a leading physician has claimed.

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
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Professor William Roche, medical director at NHS South East Coast, the strategic health authority (SHA) covering Kent, Surrey and Sussex, said the likely budget cuts would mean "we cannot afford to harm people".

The NHS is facing a funding shortfall of between £8bn-£10bn for the three years after 2011 due to the effects of the recession.

Confident

"We have about 18 months before the public sector really feels the bite," Prof Roche said. "What we have to do is get ourselves doing things better and smoother so we are driving out the money wasted by harming people. We cannot afford to harm people. This really helps focus the quality agenda."

Prof Roche is leading a team of nine clinical experts from across the SHA's region, including two from Kent, who will be responsible for designing how healthcare will be provided over the next decade.

He was confident the implications of the recession and the Government being forced to rein in public spending would not affect the authority's 10-year vision – Healthier People, Excellent Care.

"Demand is going to increase and money will not increase pro rata," he said. "Quality is better value."

One of the SHA's pledges in its strategy is a zero-tolerance approach to superbugs and to have no avoidable cases of hospital-acquired MRSA by 2011 and fewer than 2,000 cases of Clostridium difficile per year.

"Driving up quality will reduce cost," Prof Roche said. "It is the only way to do it sensibly. If no-one gets MRSA we won't be paying thousands of pounds every infection."

He said one year on from the launch of the strategy, which followed health minister Lord Darzi's NHS review, the plans were on target.

"Hospitals will be lean in terms of available money from 2011. We have to improve quality and reduce unnecessary spending, and look at models of care outside hospitals," he said.

Prof Roche said the downturn has brought the NHS freedom to innovate – but has also made it imperative. He warned the NHS had to learn after cutbacks harmed patient care during previous recessions.

He said: "Economic cycles have not always been responded to in the most intelligent ways and people recognise that. Short-term cuts to staffing levels mean you end up employing agency staff who don't have the quality and people spend longer in hospital. So this time we have to be really clever."

A recent survey by the British Medical Association found that nine out of 10 people expect cuts to NHS services.

Liberating

"We should expect efficiencies rather than cuts," Prof Roche said. "We will be having to push for efficiency but in a sensible way because that is also the cheapest way."

He added: "I think it is going to be liberating in some ways. We will be asking why we do it this way. It will be the role of innovators to deliver a better health service.

"No-one wants to spend a long time in hospital, having lots of investigations. If we can do it more efficiently it's better for the patients, it reduces costs and is better for the taxpayer."

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Specialisation points to our radical future

PATIENTS can expect more specialist centres and the demise of 'all-singing, all-dancing' A&E departments over the next 10 years, an acute care expert has said.

Dr Steve Pollack, pictured right, a consultant neurologist at Kent and Canterbury Hospital, is among nine clinical experts from across Kent, Surrey and Sussex chosen by NHS South East Coast to find the best ways of caring for people in future. He said he was interested in developing "radical new ways" to deliver treatment and said he was pleased to be heading up acute care because there were "very real problems" to tackle.

"Acute care is about how we manage emergencies, and my specific remit is to ensure patients with heart attacks, strokes and major trauma are handled in specialised centres right across the strategic health authority (SHA)," Dr Pollack said.

"It's about what patients need and how they can be better and more quickly managed, because in the past there's been a policy of: 'If you're not sure, bring them into hospital'.

"This 'admit-to-decide' policy is being changed to a more structured programme."

He said problems had been created because of a change in the way GPs provide out-of-hours services. When people call their surgery at night they are put through to a service staffed by GPs who cover a large area and will not have first-hand knowledge of the patients' conditions, he said.

"They are more likely to send you to hospital and this is not necessarily the best way of managing these patients," he said.

Disruption

There needs to be a shift in emphasis to more thorough, structured care. So if you have an asthma attack, instead of being automatically admitted, a paramedic administers the right drugs in your home.

"This will avoid problems of bringing people into hospitals – such as infections, being displaced from family and the disruption. It will be about taking acute care to the patient."

The ambulance service will play a big part in the way acute care is provided in future.

Dr Pollack said: "The management of heart attacks is one of the great success stories of the NHS. We've seen a decline in mortality with [clot-busting] drugs being delivered before patients reach hospital."

He said Kent was ahead of the rest of the SHA in terms of developing a specialist centre for heart attack patients, which is due to open at the William Harvey Hospital, Ashford, in April, 2010. Heart attack patients across the county will be taken there for expert care from consultant cardiologists, 24 hours a day, using the latest techniques. But there is a national shortage of cardiologists.

"Everyone's aware that after the next election there will be a reduction in the amount available for the NHS. Whatever the Government says, it's clear we're going to go through lean times."

Asked how he saw acute care being provided in future, he said: "Undoubtedly you will see specialisation – specialist centres for different problems. This takes pressure off A&E and other departments because they will not be looking after heart attacks, for example. There will be more centres dealing with minor injuries and with specialist requirements. The days of all-singing, all-dancing A&Es are on the wane.

"If you have a problem it's better to go to a specialist hospital. It's very important to deliver care as close to home as possible – but not if that means it's not the best care."

Staff shortages shut A&E overnight

A RECRUITMENT crisis has forced overnight closures at the casualty unit of a hospital run by a trust with vacancy rates for doctors and nurse of up to 42 per cent.

Queen Mary's Hospital in Sidcup (QMS) was already set to lose its casualty department by 2011, but recruitment problems have accelerated the plans and from August it will be shut between midnight and 8am.

The loss of A&E at the QMS is part of far-reaching plans to shake up hospital services in north Kent and south-east London and were approved by the former health secretary Alan Johnson despite overwhelming local opposition.

"It's inevitable they cannot recruit staff to a unit that's going to close. There's an air of doom across the whole operation," said John Lister, of campaign group London Health Emergency. The newly formed supertrust, South London Healthcare NHS, which was created by merging the QMS, Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Woolwich and Bromley Hospitals, has a deficit of £20.4m and an accumulated debt of £121.5m.

CASUALTY: The QMS A&E department

Savings for the trust from the plans, which also include the downgrading of maternity services at QMS, are said to total £30m. A trust official said: "All our A&E units are facing significant clinical staff vacancy rates – ranging up to 42 per cent – and it is becoming increasingly clear that in August, when a new cohort of trainee junior doctors joins us, we will receive fewer junior doctors than we need in A&E. We have been trying to recruit doctors from abroad and within the UK, but with limited success.

"There is a national shortage of doctors with experience in A&E medicine and few are keen to join a unit they know will be closing over the next few months.

"We will therefore need to close the QMS A&E overnight from August onwards."

The trust said only a small number of patients would be affected by the closure.

Fossil hunters paddle back in time with rare find on beach

By STEVE KNIGHT
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A MUDDY paddle dug up on the coastline is thought to be a Bronze Age relic of national importance.

The wooden artefact was discovered during an expedition on the Long Rock spit at Swalecliffe, near Whitstable, late last month.

If tests show it has survived from the Bronze Age – which in Britain is considered to be the period between 2700 and 700BC – then it will be one of only seven similar finds in the UK.

The expedition was led by Andy Oxford of the Kent Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) group, who was helping children find fossils as part of Wildwood animal park's annual fossil roadshow.

He said: "If what we believe is right then this paddle is absolutely of national importance and I think it will be referred to the British Museum.

"If there are only five or six in the country then it's obviously very uncommon to find one.

"It's unlikely we'll find any other boat parts here, but you never know with coastal erosion.

"It's strange at Long Rock as there can be almost no erosion for a long time and then it can be quite rapid.

"By walking there regularly like we do you notice the changes. It was lucky the paddle was spotted when it was because it might not have been as noticeable for long."

RARE ARTEFACT: This paddle, found by a member of the pubic on Long Rock Spit, is thought to date from as far back as the Bronze Age

Fantastic

After digging up the paddle, along with its broken-off tip, Mr Oxford attached it to a splint and took it back to Wildwood so it could be conserved in a freshwater tank.

It will now be taken away by archaeologists who will use tree-ring and carbon dating techniques to confirm its age.

Mr Oxford said: "When you deal with beach sites, geologists and archaeologists need to work together because the two fields become tangled.

"We need to know who to talk to and what to do quickly after we make a find like this, and it's important we keep checking these sites to ensure we don't miss anything."

About 50 people took part in the Long Rock artefact hunt, which followed on from a fossil exhibition held at Wildwood.

The paddle was spotted by the husband of the animal park's head of education, Anne Riddell.

She said: "These events are always popular and people always find something of interest, but to potentially find something as important as a Bronze Age paddle is fantastic and was really exciting for the people who came on the fossil hunt."

SHH: Tony, Cara, Ollie launch the production of Wispa Gold bars

Wispa fans shout about bar launch

CHOCOHOLICS who successfully campaigned for the return of an old favourite were invited to launch production of the bar.

Ollie Emery and Tony Halson, both from Whitstable, created a Facebook group calling for Cadbury to bring back Wispa Gold.

Their campaign proved so popular that the chocolate giant bowed to pressure and agreed to return the caramel-based snack to store shelves for a limited period from September 14.

Ollie and Tony were invited along to Cadbury's Bournville factory in Birmingham to help kick-start the production line, along with fellow Wispa-lover Cara Stripp.

Tony said: "I've been dreaming about the day when Wispa Gold would come back ever since we campaigned to get the original Wispa back in the shops.

"It's fantastic to be part of it and to actually see it happening in person."

Launched in 1981, the original Wispa bar was discontinued in 2003 until groups on a number of social networking websites campaigned for its return.

Lying health boss gets new NHS job

A SENIOR health official jailed for lying about his qualifications has landed another top NHS job.

Lee Whitehead, 45, was fired from his £78,000 post as director of planning and modernisation at Stoke-on-Trent Primary Care Trust when officials discovered he had falsely claimed to have had a doctorate and Masters degree.

He served three weeks of a 12-week sentence in prison for the offence but has now been appointed Bexley Care Trust's service development manager in commissioning.

A spokesman said: "Mr Whitehead acknowledges he made a mistake and error of judgement and declared this in his application to Bexley Care Trust.

"Mr Whitehead is an experienced NHS senior manager with nearly 20 years' service... He has a proven track record in helping to deliver better services to the public and is committed to improving service choice and delivery for the residents of Bexley."

Young cyclist is hit by car

POLICE are appealing for witnesses after a 13-year-old boy was injured when a silver car mounted the pavement in Albion Road, Cliftonville.

The boy was with friends when he was knocked off his bike on Sunday, June 14, at about 3.45pm.

He was taken to hospital with cuts and bruises.

A 26-year-old man was arrested on suspicion of assault and driving offences and he has been bailed pending further police investigations.

It is believed that there are a number of witnesses, including one who may even have filmed the incident. Anyone with information can call 01843 222076.

Tee off with the celebrities

A CELEBRITY golf day is being held on Wednesday, July 22, as the latest event in the benefit year for Kent bowler Martin Saggers.

The event is being held at the home of the European Open, the London Golf Club near Ash.

There will be a maximum of 30 teams of four on a first-come first-served basis, at £700 per team, or £175 per person. For more information call 01892 750131.

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Power bosses unite with union to avoid foreign workers row

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

UNION chiefs will seek a meeting with the owners of a new power station to prevent a repeat of an ongoing dispute over foreign workers.

Since late last year Unite has been putting pressure on foreign subcontractors helping to build a new gas-fired plant on the Isle of Grain to employ more British tradesmen.

While the situation has improved, the union is eager to avoid similar problems when work on nearby Damhead Creek 2 station – which is in the planning stages – gets under way.

Regional officer Neil Willoughby said: "The problem at the Isle of Grain was that once the building contract had started, it was very difficult for us to change things.

"That's why we are seeking a meeting with (Damhead Creek owner) ScottishPower to get in early and try and secure a suitable clause in that contract. This sort of thing needs to be sorted at the planning stage."

A planning application for the £500 million Damhead Creek 2 is due to be submitted this summer. Should approval be granted, the building of the gas-powered station will support up to 1,000 construction jobs over three years and inject an estimated £27m per year into the Medway economy during its 25-year lifespan.

National representatives of both Unite and ScottishPower met earlier this year, and the outcome of the meeting suggests Mr Willoughby has little to worry about.

Strong workforce

A spokesman for the energy giant said: "ScottishPower continues to support UK labour and recognises the skills, competence and strong health and safety record of both employees and our UK contracting workforce. We met with Unite in May, who confirmed ScottishPower is a good, locally-focused employer whose key contractors were fulfilling their requirements under the national agreement for the engineering construction industry."

Meanwhile, Unite is slowly securing more jobs for British workers at the Isle of Grain station. Mr Willoughby told Kent on Sunday that a recently-appointed Italian firm was willing to take on British workers and the UK-based EI.WHF had also landed a major contract.

The union says the inequality issue arose because the firm overseeing the building of the station – French multinational Alstom – did not place a clause in the tendering contract that says subcontractors should seek to employ British workers.

The row intensified in March when a contract leaked to the GMB union proved that one of the Polish firms had been paying Polish tradesmen £4 less than the nationally-agreed rate. This has since been rectified.

Mr Willoughby said: "I think the relationship between us is improving now. However, British workers are still in the minority at Grain and we're still not happy about how many jobs are available.

"The issues are ongoing and I think will be until the end of the project."

Young swimmer Channels her terror to help children

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
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A TEENAGER has braved her fear of jellyfish to swim the Channel in aid of a children's hospice.

Victoria Ross left Dover Harbour in the early hours of Wednesday along with the five other members of the relay team who took up the challenge.

On Thursday, the tired but jubilant 15-year-old said: "It was very, very hard work. The conditions started off really good and we thought this is going to be really nice. But after about four hours it completely turned, the fog came down and the waves got bigger, which made it harder... when we reached France it was amazing."

The team made it to Calais in 13 hours and 41 minutes, beating their target of between 16 and 20 hours.

Victoria has raised £3,000 of the £5,000 she hopes to collect for Demelza Hospice Care for Children, which is based in Sittingbourne and has two other residential hospices, including one in south east London and another in East Sussex.

James Hunt, a fundraising manger for Demelza, said: "Victoria faced freezing temperatures, oil tankers, cargo vessels and dodging jellyfish, and we are truly honoured she has chosen us as her charity."

Victoria said she chose to support Demelza after Mr Hunt took her on a tour around the charity's new centre in Eltham: "I went to visit Demelza and I just thought it was fantastic and that what they did was really worthwhile. When I was doing my swim I thought about the charity and it really helped keep me going."

The pupil at the James Allen Girls School in Dulwich, south east London, said inheriting the "mad gene" from her mother had inspired her to take on the challenge. But it was not the tough two-hour swims she would have to do as part of the relay team that worried her most – but her fear of jellyfish.

She said fear of encountering the stinging sea creatures had sent her into panic attacks.

But she braved the swim wearing only the one-piece swimsuit allowed in the Channel-swimming rules, she said: "I didn't get stung, two people saw them, but they weren't really a problem. It was the weather turning that was the real challenge in the end."

To make a donation to Victoria's Demelza fund go to www.justgiving.com/victorialross.

SUCCESSFUL SWIMMERS: Inset, the relay team on arrival at Audresselles Beach near Calais: Benny Barham, 17, Tim Davies, 17, Will Brenninkmeyer, 17, all of Worth School, Victoria Ross, who is also pictured swimming, Nick Adams, 31, and Sakura Hingley, 27

Another MP to step down at next election

LABOUR MP Derek Wyatt has announced he will quit at the next General Election.

The Sittingbourne and Sheppey representative holds the smallest majority of any of his fellow party members in Kent – 79 – and was expected to face another tough battle with Tory candidate Gordon Henderson.

Yet the 59-year-old told reporters his decision to step down was for personal reasons, not because he expected to lose his seat.

Mr Wyatt was speaking at an IT conference in Korea this week, but a message announcing his retirement was posted on his website. It read: "Derek wrote to local party members last Friday, to close friends and colleagues across the political divide and to his weekly newsletter recipients.

"He has already received a large number of emails from constituents thanking him for his service to the community."

Mr Wyatt added in a statement: "I have had a ball as the MP for Sittingbourne and Sheppey and have done my very best for them in Parliament."

The former England rugby international was elected in the 1997 landslide, but came perilously close to losing his seat to Gordon Henderson four years ago.

Mr Henderson said he believed he could have beaten Mr Wyatt at the next General Election and criticised him for waiting until then to stand down.

Mr Wyatt is the fourth Kent MP to announce he will not contest his seat at the polls. Fellow Labour MP Bob Marshall-Andrews (Medway) will also step down, as will Tories Ann Widdecombe (Maidstone and The Weald) and Michael Howard (Folkestone and Hythe).

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CARNAGE: Mistakes were made over the London bombings in July, 2005, but Dr Thomas Hennessey, right, is keen to point out that real intelligence gathering isn't the same as it appears in James Bond

Author bringing MI5's secret past in from the cold

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

COUNTER-terrorism agents at MI5 should not be made scapegoats for failing to stop the London bombings, says a scholar.

Dr Thomas Hennessey – who has written a new book on the history of the UK's security service – says while mistakes were made over the July 7, 2005, atrocities, the agency was otherwise doing an excellent job in protecting its people.

The reader of history at Canterbury Christ Church University added that because of the huge amount of intelligence received by MI5 every day, mistakes are bound to happen from time to time: "You have to say that they couldn't cope with the sheer scale of what they were dealing with.

"Intelligence is an art, not a science. MI5 has to make real life-or-death decisions and people make mistakes. I think that's what happened with the London bombings.

"They are bombarded with material and have to prioritise it all and decide what is important and what is not. Unfortunately, while they may stop a terrorist attack in one place, that might prevent them from stopping another tragedy elsewhere.

"I hope people will understand the sort of pressures MI5 is faced with in an uncertain and evolving security environment post-9/11. It's one we are all going to have to live with for a long time to come. What we have to remember is that everything they do is in our best interests and generally they make the best decisions to protect us."

Together with Claire Thomas, Dr Hennessey, 42, wrote Spooks: The Unofficial History of MI5, to coincide with the 100th anniversary of the agency's formation.

The book, which draws from previously unpublished secret sources as well as former agents' memoirs and terrorist court cases, was officially launched at the Folkestone branch of Waterstone's last week. Guest of honour was the town's MP, former Tory leader Michael Howard.

Dr Hennessey said: "I wanted to write something about MI5 because I had another interest in Northern Ireland and a lot of what went on with the Troubles went on at a level below what the public could see.

"The more you get into the subject, the more you see how huge a part MI5 has played over the years. During World War Two for instance, they managed to convince Hitler the D-Day landings in Normandy were an elaborate diversion to the real landings at Calais. Had it not been for Hitler himself ordering his troops to stay at Calais, our fighters could have easily been battered back into the English Channel.

"The exploits of some of MI5's agents seem straight out of a James Bond story. But they were real people."

The popularity of the James Bond series of films has given many a distorted view of MI5, especially as the fictional spy actually works for MI6. MI5 is primarily concerned with internal security, MI6 with external security.

A fan of Ian Fleming's best-known creation, Dr Hennessey said the inner workings of the agency were a lot less glamorous in reality: "The thing with films like Bond is that everything is solved in an hour, whereas the reality is that agents usually spend months or even years following a target.

"And from World War One up until the Cold War, it was human intelligence rather than fancy gadgets that had been most useful to MI5.

"The last 10 or 15 years have seen technology become a lot more sophisticated, but you still need that human intelligence.

"Having somebody on the ground is still absolutely vital."

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'Dirty bomb' rehearsal gives county taste of what could happen from terror attack

Emergency services play out doomsday scenario

SAFE HANDS: A nurse in a protective suit guides a patient to a decontamination unit

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
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AN EMERGENCY services' dress rehearsal for dealing with the aftermath of a dirty bomb suggests the terrorist threat to Kent remains high.

More than 1,000 police, fire and ambulance workers took part in the exercise.

Earlier this year Assistant Chief Constable Gary Beautridge told Kent on Sunday the county was a prime target for attack due to its large number of iconic locations, one of which was close to where last weekend's huge training exercise took place.

The scenario that was tested was a 'radiological explosion' – or dirty bomb attack – at a fictional college near Dover Castle, complete with actors and fake blood.

It took more than a year to plan and is thought to be one of the largest ever rehearsals for such a terrorist threat.

Deputy Chief Constable Adrian Leppard oversaw the exercise on behalf of Kent Police.

He said: "This has been a really important exercise for us and our partner agencies, and we are all really pleased at how well it went. This particular scenario was a radiological device which presented, as you can imagine, a lot of challenges.

"We had police, fire and ambulance teams on the ground to decontaminate and treat a number of casualties.

"The importance of exercises like this to the people of Kent is that if any major incident was to happen next week or next month, then we know we and our partner agencies can respond effectively to anything that may come into our county."

Radiological explosions involve terrorists combining explosive materials with nuclear waste – hence the term dirty bomb.

Toxic rubbish

Last week the European Commission unveiled proposals to boost the Continent's defences against such attacks by making it more difficult for people to get hold of toxic rubbish and by improving the sharing of information between its member nations.

The Dover Castle operation – codenamed Saxon Shore after the Roman forts found on both sides of the Channel – also involved police, fire and ambulance workers from Essex as well as staff from Kent County Council and Dover District Council.

The Home Office and the Department of Health helped co-ordinate the project, while the Health Protection Agency oversaw similar role-play exercises at Maidstone Hospital and the William Harvey Hospital in Ashford.

Mr Leppard said: "Every agency has the opportunity to test itself and its own staff in regular exercises and training, but it is only when you bring all the agencies together that you can really develop the learning necessary about how we would all respond to a real incident on the ground."

Kent Police has a legal responsibility under the Civil Contingencies Act to test its emergency procedures on a regular basis.

Mr Leppard said the exercise had no impact on everyday policing in Kent as all those involved would not normally have been on duty.

CLEAN-UP: Agencies deal with the injured during the role play which took over a year to plan

Life's smelling of roses

Pictures: CAROLINE IRBY/READER'S DIGEST

MAKING SCENTS OF THE WORLD: Aaron Lamb says his life has completely changed after an operation to repair his septum. You can read more about him in Reader's Digest (inset)

Doctors have been able to restore the vital sense of smell for charity worker

By **JENNA PUDELEK**
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AN OPERATION to fix the nose of a charity worker has allowed him to experience a new world of smells and tastes with an almost childlike enthusiasm.

Aaron Lamb, who grew up in Strood, lost his sense of smell when, as a scrappy 11-year-old, he got into a fight a school that saw his face smashed into the concrete playground.

Now after 17 years of not being able to smell even the most pungent scents or breathe through his nose, he is taking delight in everything from the exotic aromas of Cambodian markets to the whiffy kitchen bin.

"It's quite funny actually, even now I'm finding new things are surprising me all the time," he said. "I think it was Johnson's Baby Oil lotion this morning and it smelt like candles.

"I asked my fiancée why she smelt of candles and she said it's just the moisturiser I use."

Mr Lamb had his deviated septum fixed last September by Whittington NHS Trust in north London, which has allowed him not only to taste his fiancée Eliza's expert cooking but also experience the rush of memory brought on by a specific smell that most people take for granted.

The 28-year-old said: "The other day I was walking down the street on the way to work and there is this hardware shop opening its shutters.

"I must have smelt wood or sawdust and it reminded me of when I was younger, of my grandad's shed where he would make cricket bats out of old wardrobes. I have literally not thought of that since I was five-years-old.

"I've only had that experience twice so far, but it made me shiver. One of the reasons I did this is because smell is such a big thing for memories, I did not want to go another 20 years into the future and not remember the smell of them.

"My memory is absolutely terrible and I think it might be to do with things not being stimulated by smell and that process in my head."

Asked why it took him so long to have his nose fixed, Mr Lamb said when he was younger he was too busy playing Action Man and rough and tumble to be bothered by it.

In his self-conscious teens he did not want to walk around with a big patch over his nose and was "busy chasing girls".

Throughout his childhood he hid the fact that he could not smell, but later at university it became something to make him stand out and an unusual party trick.

Asked if he now feels less unique, he said: "Not at all, when you're at uni it's a time when you're really carving your identity and something that was good to have, but now I'm a bit older it is so much sweeter in the world to be able to have a full set of senses."

Mr Lamb, who works for the international animal welfare charity Spana that helps animals in some of the world's poorest countries, said he recently returned to Cambodia for the second time and revelled in the country's fragrance.

"I had no idea at all what it would be like – it blew my mind," he said. "The senses and the complexities to smells that linger in different parts of the markets were amazing.

Blood

"It really has changed my life in such a subtle way. What has been amazing is smelling the insidious, subtle things that go on in the background."

After waking up from the operation to the metallic smell of blood, Mr Lamb's first pleasant sniff was the smell after it rains followed by the "amazing" taste of a chicken mayo sandwich.

"In the first two months it was really weird things like the bin, I knew it smelt disgusting but I would smell it anyway," he said. "It sounds so surreal and I guess it was to me, I was just like a little child."

He added: "It has been something that has subtlely changed my perspective on the world.

"It is so difficult to describe it is just the thing of waking up and smelling the pillow next to you and knowing it smells different to yours. The smells of food as you walk down the street to work past cafés and coffee shops."

• Read more about Mr Lamb's story in the July issue of Reader's Digest magazine on stands now.

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CAST: Connor Panayi (far left) with co-stars on Disney children's show, Life Bites

Youngster gets a bite at Disney sketch show

A DISNEY Channel sketch show will return for a second series next month with a Kent schoolboy among its collection of young stars.

Connor Panayi, 11, from Trottiscliffe, near West Malling, will play the part of Boris when the children's comedy Life Bites hits digital television next week.

The youngster, who has also appeared in the hit BBC One medical drama Holby City, said he was excited to be joining the cast.

He added: "The opportunity to play Boris and work with the Disney Channel is a dream come true. I just hope viewers enjoy watching me as much as I'm looking forward to being in it."

More than two million viewers regularly tuned into the first series of Life Bites, which this year will consist of 26 five-minute episodes each containing sketches based on the everyday trials and tribulations of teenage life.

The Boris character played by Connor is the intelligent classmate of one of the show's stars Molly, played by actress Tianna Webster.

The second series of Life Bites begins at 10.25am next Saturday, July 11, on the Disney Channel.

Motley crew in move to dispel racism fears

Banned Morris dancers say black faces are part of ancient tradition

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A TROUPE of morris dancers want to educate the public about why they blacken their faces – after they were banned from performing at a school.

The Motley 'Border' Morris Men said the reason their faces are turned black is because of an ancient tradition, not because of any racist connotations.

Years ago, dancers in the Welsh borders use burned cork to cover their faces so neighbours wouldn't recognise them as they begged for money on the streets.

Disguise

Squire of the Dartford-based Motley dancers is Peter Hargreaves.

He said: "We are very disappointed to have our third cancellation this year.

"I think it's a case where we are booked, and then someone sees our webpage with the picture on the front with some of the dancers in blackened faces."

The latest to pull the plug on the dancers was Chantry Primary School in Gravesend.

Mr Hargreaves said: "They thought we might cause some offence with the black make-up.

NO RACISTS: Motley 'Border' troupe say blacking out their faces is part of an old tradition used by morris dancers to disguise themselves from neighbours when begging for money

"It seems those that have cancelled wondered if the faces would cause offence with the audiences.

"What we really want to do is educate people to what it's all about, which is a disguise.

"We are not pretending to be Afro-Caribbean or anything like that. It's a disguise farm workers used to use if they didn't want to be seen to be begging when they were out dancing on the street for money.

"We could change and not use the black faces any more, but it is really down to how it is perceived.

"There are other sides in the UK that perform in exactly the same way. It is a tradition, so should we change that tradition or not?

"The background is that it has nothing to do with any kind of racist aspect. It's about disguise.

"If that is misinterpreted then it is more about education than people's perception."

The side was founded in 1981, and secretary Jim Snelling said: "I understand the school's concern, but it is a shame they didn't take the opportunity to find out or ask us along to have a discussion about this fairly important part of our culture."

Chantry Primary headteacher Hazel King refused to talk about the cancellation.

But in a statement, the school said: "We organised the event to bring a diverse and fragile community together.

"To celebrate all cultures we booked a morris troupe having failed to recognise the possible significance for our community of their tradition to perform with blackened faces, and for this we sincerely apologise.

"We found ourselves in a difficult position of weighing up any potential offence versus not wishing to compromise the morris dancers' tradition.

"It's a 'damned if we do, damned if we don't' scenario and quite understandably it will be a talking point as to the rights and wrongs of our decision.

"I apologise to the morris troupe for any inconvenience caused and ask for people's understanding at what was a difficult but well-intended decision."

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That's park life

New exhibition will showcase memories of town park before development begins

By STEVE KNIGHT
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

MEMORIES of a much-loved town park will be put on public display before large parts of the land are built on.

Artist friends Sue Evans and Franny Swann have arranged a series of exhibitions on the past, present and future of Dartford's Central Park, which looks set to be redeveloped with a new Tesco supermarket.

For the exhibition they set up a market stall and collected more than 300 memories from members of the public, some of whom offered more unusual tales than others.

Franny said: "Our favourite story was that many years ago there were long ponds in the park that used to have these big red fish, and one year there was an enormous flood.

"The whole town ended up under water and all the fish were washed out of their ponds. It was only when the water subsided that some of them were found in the cellar of the local Woolworths.

"I suppose there must have been a newspaper article about it at the time because so many people seem to know about it even today.

"Some of the memories we received go back as far as the first park-keeper and the war years. Some are happy – one man told us he proposed to his wife in the park – while some were sadder, such as the man whose sister contracted polio from the paddling pool.

Much loved

"The people of Dartford were really generous and we never knew what story would be told next. Sue and I both had a really lovely time and we're looking forward to the exhibition."

Members of the public who donated their memories were asked to write them down on a piece of paper, which the artists have encased, decorated and hung from the ceiling of Dartford library.

Work created by Franny and Sue will also be on display, as well as that of fellow Hextable Art Studio members Caroline Gould and Britta von Zweigbergk.

Franny said: "The park is much-loved and much-used and I think a lot of people in Dartford are concerned about what will happen to it in the future. Thankfully it looks like any redevelopment is several years away yet.

"So many people were happy to give us their memories and a lot have been asking about when the exhibition will start, so it looks like they're looking forward to it."

Park 2 will be open in the Peter Blake Gallery during normal library hours until Thursday, July 30.

Light refreshments will be available at the official opening of the exhibition, between 5.30pm and 7.30pm on Thursday, July 9.

PADDLING: The pool in Dartford Park had unhappy memories for one man

COLLECTING: Franny Swann has arranged a show about the park

Taxing jobs

ONE hundred port workers face an uncertain future after their employer got into a bitter £3m row with the taxman.

Car company Gefco has vowed to do everything it can to keep staff on the payroll despite being landed with the massive bill from HM Revenue and Customs.

The business employs more than 100 people at Sheerness Docks, where it imports thousands of French cars every year.

But Gefco bosses have been in an battle with the Government since last year, when officials decided to levy extra rates on port companies, backdating them to April 2005.

New magistrates swear to do what's right without fear

SIXTEEN new magistrates have been sworn in at Maidstone Crown Court by the Liaison Judge for Kent, His Honour Judge Jeremy Carey.

They will sit in courts in north and central Kent and include Michael Fanning, a registered nurse from Medway; Pamela Spindlow, who owns a bed and breakfast business in Medway; and Carolyn Goodair, who is a teacher from Aylesford.

Each new Justice of the Peace swore or affirmed allegiance to the Queen and that they "will do right to all manner of people after the laws and usages of this realm without fear or favour, affection or ill will".

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THIS colourful picture of a poppy field was taken in Westwell Lane near Ashford by Win Dalton of Kennington.

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Fishing businesses face end of the line if Euro law passed

A U-TURN by the European Commission over controversial plans for new fishing quotas has sparked further concern among recreational sea anglers, ***writes Steve Knight.***

Earlier this year the European Parliament agreed that rules requiring non-commercial fishermen to register their catches as part of the national fish quota were not fair on countries like the UK which do not have a problem with commercial fishermen posing as recreational anglers.

They voted to recommend Article 47 of the Common Fisheries Policy be changed to allow the legislation to be voluntary, but an amended version of the paperwork suggests their views have fallen on deaf ears.

Strange

If the wording of the policy is not altered, it could spell disaster for tackle shops, boat charter firms and other related businesses in Kent.

South East Tory MEP Daniel Hannan, who is a member of the European Parliament's Committee on Fisheries, said he would continue to fight the legislation.

He said: "We tried to get the part about recreational sea anglers deleted so it would become voluntary for countries to introduce, because one or two do have a problem with commercial fishermen pretending to be recreational ones.

"We do not have this problem and we managed to push it through in Parliament, but now the EC is trying to reintroduce it.

"I suspect they've done it because as a result of the elections there are now a number of new MEPs and the EC probably thinks it stands a better chance now.

"But nothing is finalised yet and we will continue to fight against it. I still think we have a good chance of succeeding because a lot of people are against it. It's a solution to a problem that does not exist."

If implemented, Article 47 will require recreational fishermen to register their boats, with whatever they catch counted against the national fisheries quota.

Each country would also be required to decide what share of its quota to allocate to each species of fish.

Angling Trust campaigner Leon Roskilly, from Rainham, said the UK often had a more difficult time than other nations in getting its point across.

He said: "On the Continent they have a different system where nothing ever happens unless you have permission to do it.

"Here we take the common law approach in that we can do anything unless there is a law forbidding it.

"We appear quite strange to our European brothers and a lot of people can't see what's wrong with the British.

"We tend to have people who fish for sport, which seems strange to other countries that do it purely for food. It's an important part of our economy, which many people don't understand."

WIN! tickets to Lounge on the Farm 2009

KENT'S 'bestest' music festival, Lounge on The Farm is back for its fourth annual hoedown on July 10, 11 and 12 this year.

Boasting 160 bands over six stages, the finest festival food and drink ever to be served in a field, and a whole host of non-musical entertainment, from burlesque and barbershop quartets through to bug-hunts and bongo lessons, there's a lot to enjoy at Merton Farm this summer – and you could be enjoying it for free.

Becoming an established name on the festival circuit, this small but perfectly-formed Kent start-up really does offer a taste of our county over the weekend, from the best local bands to the local and seasonal produce available in the food courts, including their very own 'Lounge On The Farm Cider' brewed by Faversham's famous Pawley Farm.

Their unique take on the boutique festival has garnered Lounge on the Farm a lot of praise, and the event has been recommended in The Times, The Guardian and The Telegraph already this summer.

This year sees Roots Manuva, The Horrors, Edwyn Collins and Mr Scruff heading up the eclectic bill, with a notable return of the 'Canterbury Sound' to Canterbury with Gong and Steve Hillage playing over the weekend alongside the best in Kentish musicians such as James Taylor Quartet and Billy Childish.

It's not just about the music on Merton Farm though, with an all-new 'Meadows' playing host to an open-air theatre stage, comedy, a solar-powered cinema, petting zoo and an on-site farmers' market, among many other attractions.

There is a remarkable amount of entertainment to take in over the three days on the farm, and we've got a selection of day tickets available to win.

For more information and to check out the full wealth of entertainment on offer this year, visit www.loungeonthefarm.co.uk.

Kent on Sunday has teamed up with Lounge on the Farm to offer four pairs of day tickets. To enter, simply answer the question below and send your entry on a postcard along with your email address (if applicable), name, address, and daytime telephone number to LOTF2009 Competition, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. The closing date is July 8, 2009.

Question: On which farm is Lounge on the Farm being held?

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By JENNA PUDELEK
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

Lottery's lifeline for asylum charity staff

Volunteers continue to help detainees thanks to funding

NEWLY won Lottery funding of nearly £400,000 will enable a charity to continue and expand its work with asylum seekers.

The Dover Detainee Visitor Group (DDVG) has more than 80 volunteers who support the vulnerable, isolated and often depressed men locked up indefinitely in the town's immigration removal centre.

The detainees have often fled war or persecution in their countries of origin and are now awaiting their fates at the hands of the UK immigration system.

Vebi Kosumi, the charity's director, said: "When I started in 2004, I was supposed to work 35 hours a week but it probably ended up being nearly 60 hours a week.

"All the time I felt guilty that I'm not doing enough and that these people are not being released.

"I speak to all our volunteers saying 'just by doing this you have changed the world of an individual'. I say 'you have not put them in that situation it is out of your power'."

Volunteers spend a minimum of around two hours a week at the Dover Immigration Removal Centre speaking to detainees who are referred to the charity by themselves or through other agencies.

Mr Kosumi said the £397,000 Lottery grant would cover the charity's costs for the next three years, employ three people full-time, another three people part-time and provide support for refugees and asylum seekers who have been released from the centre.

He spoke about how the volunteers handle their own emotions when dealing with difficult cases involving horrendous personal stories and the threat of deportation.

Deportation

"I think saying you can switch off, you can't, but with experience there comes a time you are aware of all the complexities around immigration and you do your best," he said.

"The job comes with a passion that all our volunteers have. They have a hunger to help people and put their heart and soul into the organisation."

Mr Kosumi, who is originally from Kosovo, said the DDVG is non-campaigning and non-political, although he has spoken out in the past about the indefinite detention of asylum seekers in centres such as Dover.

The DDVG offices are covered with paintings by past and current detainees at the centre, who are sometimes held there for more than a year.

"I think the majority of asylum seekers and detainees would rather know whatever the decision is. Most would not want to be sent back, some have actually asked to be sent home but they are not for whatever admin reason," he said.

"I'm aware of a lot of asylum seekers who have stayed for a long time and they would rather have a decision than to be kept in limbo because that is the worse thing you could be in.

"Putting a time limit on detention is a number one issue for us."

The charity has been going through a tough time and Mr Kosumi has been working both as director and coordinating the volunteers.

Money from the Big Lottery means the charity can continue but next year, Mr Kosumi will again have to begin working on other sources of funding for the future.

"Every single charity is struggling at the moment," he said. "It is especially hard for charities that support asylum seekers and immigration detainees."

Human rights

DDVG volunteers are given training in multiculturalism, human rights, listening skills and mental health issues so they are prepared to help the detainees.

Mr Kosumi added: "When I joined it was mainly people of retirement age. Now we've had a lot of young people from the university and people from all different backgrounds.

"These are people who really want to do it, people who say this is not right. The 42 days without charge for terrorist suspects has attracted a lot of attention.

"No-one is aware of the detainees' situation. People join who are concerned about human rights or concerned about just people."

Union's pay anger

A WORKERS' leader has hit out after county councillors voted in an eight per cent hike in their annual allowance.

David Lloyd, secretary of the Kent branch of Unison, pointed out that Kent County Council had only allowed staff at the authority a one per cent pay increase this year.

"Councillors managed to find the funding to give themselves an eight per cent increase but only gave staff a one per cent increase when they had budgeted for two per cent," he said. "They are increasing their own expenses, but ignoring requests for a reasonable increase to staff pay."

Tory councillors voted in the four-year increase last week, which will see the basic allowance rise to £13,000. Lib Dems and Labour councillors were against the increase but lost to the huge Tory majority.

Allowances are recommended by an Independent Remuneration Panel and it is up to the full council whether or not to accept the panel's proposals.

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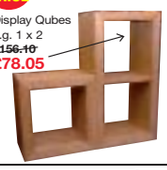
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St. Omer Area: The Flemish town of Saint-Omer stands on a hillside on the edge of the River Aa marshes, less than 30 miles from Calais. The large square in the town holds a weekly market on Saturday mornings, selling fresh local produce from the farms on the marshes. A branch of the river runs through the lower part of the town and a boat trip is an ideal way of seeing the 13th Century Abbey, houses and remarkable open countryside. Or you can visit the fantastic underground World War 2 museum nearby at La Coupole, the site of the V2 rocket in Helfaut and the Eperlecques Bunker are two of the great relics of the Second World War in Europe, that can be visited now as History and Remembrance Centres.

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Airport could force wildlife to take flight

Pictures: RSPB-IMAGES.COM

THRIVING... BUT FOR HOW LONG?: Red adimral butterfly and a wheatear at Dungeness

WILD birds in the Dungeness area are flourishing, but airport expansion at Lydd could destroy all the RSPB's hard work, ***writes Chris Murphy***.

That's the claim from the site manager for the bird charity, Bob Gomes.

He said it has been a bumper year for birds of prey at RSPB Dungeness. This includes growing numbers of barn owls, kestrels and marsh harriers.

Mr Gomes said they are all breeding on the reserve, and even sightings of other species have increased in the past 12 months thanks to the improved weather of late. Up to 15 hobbies are now regularly using the reserve as a hunting ground, as are peregrines and little owls.

But it could all be undone with an increased number of flights out of nearby Lydd Airport.

Biodiversity

Mr Gomes said: "Hobbies are known for their agility and speed and to see large numbers circling the reserve is breathtaking. They fly low and will sometimes end up right in your path. The other day I was practically eyeball-to-eyeball with one, it was incredible.

"All these remarkable species in one place is nature's way of giving Dungeness the thumbs up.

"It means the area's biodiversity is healthy enough to support the needs of these demanding species. If ever you needed a clearer message about the need to stop Lydd Airport's expansion, it's this.

"We have seen media reports that council officers have recommended the plans for Lydd Airport expansion be rejected, we can only hope councillors follow the advice of their own officers and throw this out once and for all."

He is backed by Protect Kent, the Kent branch of the Campaign for the Protection of Rural England. It says is it bitterly disappointed Shepway District Council decided to delay a planned meeting at which a decision was to be made over the planned expansion.

The delay is said to be at the request of the owners of the airport, but Protect Kent believes the decision has already been dragged out long enough.

The meeting had been scheduled for July 9, but the authority said it will now consider plans for a runway extension and a new passenger terminal building on September 23 instead.

Dr Hilary Newport, director of Protect Kent, said she was bemused and concerned by the decision to defer consideration of the application to enable the applicant to assess the officer's report over an extended period, contrary to normal protocol. This could set an important precedent for other applications.

The airport has long said its expansion will have a negligible effect on wildlife.

And just last month members of the Channel Chamber of Commerce backed the airport's expansion in a poll.

Chamber chief executive Peter Hobbs said: "This is a very powerful message from the business community of Shepway that the area needs the airport to grow and develop. The vast majority of those taking part in our poll believe the expansion will be good for business."

Cliff Spink, managing director of Lydd Airport, said: "If we are allowed to develop operations I really believe that Lydd can act as a catalyst for economic regeneration in the region, creating jobs and bringing hope to local communities blighted by soaring unemployment."

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COMRADE: Retired pioneer sergeant, James Cooper, is going to Buckingham Palace in recognition of his charitable duties to current and former servicemen

Royal appointment for soldier with a big heart

Volunteer heads to Buckingham Palace party

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

A FORMER soldier has been invited to Buckingham Palace in recognition of his tireless support for his comrades in the 20 years since he left the Army.

Canterbury pensioner James Cooper retired in 1988 as a pioneer sergeant with the Queen's Regiment and has worked as a volunteer for the charity SSAFA Forces Help virtually ever since.

The organisation – which provides support for current and former servicemen suffering from a range of problems – first made an impression on Mr Cooper when his wife left him towards the end of his service period.

He said: "I won custody of two of our children but it took me a year to get the youngest. It was a very difficult time for me.

"I'd just served 22 years with the Army and had been on several operational tours, and during that time I belonged to a lovely group of people who all looked out for each other.

"I felt that I lost all that when I retired, but SSAFA showed me that I was wrong and that a brotherhood still exists.

"They turned up on my door with a food parcel one day and I was so grateful. I told them I would repay the debt."

During the course of his 20 years with SSAFA (Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen and Families Association), Mr Cooper estimates he has helped more than 100 ex-servicemen and women deal with problems ranging from bereavement and debt, to homelessness and disability.

He says his most rewarding case involved a young former soldier from his own regiment who was sleeping rough in Canterbury and recognised his old sergeant walking past.

Mr Cooper said: "Through SSAFA Forces Help I was able to find money to get the lad off the streets, into a secure hostel and back into work."

The Northern Ireland veteran – who took part in seven operational tours during the Troubles – also works as a caretaker at both Canterbury Christ Church University and St Peter's Methodist Church, and for nearly 30 years has been a member of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes.

His son Scot will accompany him at Tuesday's Buckingham Palace garden party.

Mr Cooper said: "I just enjoy helping people. It doesn't cost me anything and I do it all with a good heart.

"There are people with nothing so it doesn't hurt for us to help them however we can."

The Kent branch of SSAFA Forces Help has about 150 volunteers, most of whom are caseworkers helping the ex-services community.

Last year they helped more than 1,000 people in the county by arranging financial support worth about £500,000 and coming up with solutions for other problems.

Visit www.ssafa.org.uk for more information on the organisation.

PM says TA to our reservists

GORDON Brown was among those who congratulated reservist soldiers and their employers at a Downing Street reception.

Territorial Army member Cpl James De Ville, 31, from Ashford, was one of those thanked by the Prime Minister at an event to mark the first national Armed Forces Day.

Mr De Ville teaches design and engineering at Brockhill Park Performing Arts College in Folkestone, and was accompanied to Downing Street by the school's principle Sonette Schwartz.

He said: "The college has been incredibly supportive of my membership of the TA.

"When I was serving in Iraq in 2006-07 the last thing I needed was to be worried about my job back home.

"The reception was a great way for me to say thank you for that support."

Mrs Schwartz added: "People in the TA deserve the support of their employers and we're happy to do whatever we can to help James.

"We also believe employers benefit from the training and experience reservists receive. James is a great role model for the young people at the college."

There are currently about 34,000 members of the Reserve Forces, the majority of whom belong to the Territorial Army with the rest split between the Royal Naval Reserve, Royal Marines Reserve and Royal Auxiliary Air Force.

Since January, 2003, more than 17,000 reservists have been mobilised for full-time active service, mainly in Iraq and Afghanistan.

The Downing Street reception – organised by Supporting Britain's Reservists and Employers (SABRE) – was also attended by Alison Black of AXA PPP Healthcare Group in Tunbridge Wells.

Mrs Black is the director of human resources at the firm, which also employs members of the Reserve Forces.

SABRE director Tim Corry said: "When a reservist is mobilised, knowing they have the genuine support of their employer is extremely important.

"However, we recognise that at times this can be a challenge for the employer, who has to balance this support with business demands.

"To help with this, there is a considerable amount of advice and support available that employers can easily access though regionally-based SABRE representatives."

NO10: Cpl James De Ville and employer Sonette Schwartz at Downing Street

Victoria Cross hero is saluted with memorial

A VICTORIA Cross winner will be celebrated with a memorial plaque to be unveiled in Tunbridge Wells next week.

Colonel John Duncan Grant, of the 10th Gurkha Rifles, was awarded the highest military honour by Edward VII in 1905 following the storming of the Gyantse Jong in Tibet a year earlier.

Then a lieutenant, he was recognised for leading his men into the fortress despite coming under heavy rock attack from the enemy forces above which at one point caused him to fall about 30ft.

Born in 1877, Col Grant entered the Army in 1898 and served in numerous wars over the next 20 years. He died in 1967.

A Gurkha piper and other soldiers and dignitaries will attend the unveiling of the memorial, which will take place at Kent and Sussex Cemetery at 11am on Tuesday.

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CRAZY JANE: Richard Dadd was admitted in 1844 as a criminal lunatic having murdered his father. Crazy Jane is one of his only two known paintings on insanity

CASE STUDIES: Emma Riches in 1857-1859, who suffered from post-natal depression. The first photograph was taken on admission, and the second on her discharge. Her case notes can be found in the 'Explore Bethlem' part of the website of the Bethlem Royal Hospital

'A symbol for man's inhumanity to man'

By JENNA PUDELEK
jenna.pudelek@kosmedia.co.uk

ONCE notorious for the cruel and inhumane treatment of the mentally ill, the original Bedlam is now a leading psychiatric hospital in leafy suburbia.

Bethlem Royal Hospital moved to Beckenham in 1930, with its facilities spread around 250 acres of grounds and offers local and regional mental health services.

It is also a specialised centre for eating disorders.

A small museum that opened on the site in 1970 serves as the only reminder of the hospital's dark past.

The history of the institution stretches as far back as 1247, although the first evidence of a mentally ill patient dates from 1405, explained Michael Phillips, head of Bethlem Museum and Archives.

Inhumanity

Famed for its coining of the word 'bedlam' as a place or situation of noisy uproar and confusion, the hospital also allowed 'tourists' into its buildings to stare at the 'lunatics' housed there.

The museum has a selection of restraint devices used there until the 1830s. Restraint was the main form of 'care' for people with mental health problems until the development of more humane 'moral treatment', which was an early example of a psychological approach.

Historian Roy Porter has described Bethlem as "a symbol for man's inhumanity to man, for callousness and cruelty".

Mr Phillips said remembering the hospital's history and the patients treated there through their art and medical records were an important part of de-stigmatising mental health in the present day.

"One in seven of us suffers from some kind of mental distress during the course of our lifetimes, but no-one talks about it," he said.

"One of our aims, a major one, is trying to push forward the de-stigmatisation of mental illness. Understanding treatment [of people with mental illness] in the past is part of that."

A major part of the museum's work is looking after and displaying nearly 1,000 paintings and pictures, mainly by former patients at the hospital.

The Victorian painter Richard Dadd was born in Chatham and studied at the Royal Academy.

In 1843 after becoming convinced his father was the Devil, he killed him with a knife. He was arrested and confessed and was committed to the criminal department of Bethlem.

He continued to paint while at the hospital and later when he was moved to the newly opened Broadmoor in 1864. It is believed he had a form of schizophrenia.

Another notable artist, Louis Wain, who is also believed to have had schizophrenia, spent time at Bethlem during the early 1920s. He is famed for his pictures of cats and some psychiatrists believe that his deteriorating mental health can be seen through his work.

"School groups are interested in seeing how artists were trying to express things such as obsessive compulsive disorder or anorexia through art," he said.

"I thought when I started here they were a bit too powerful, [for schoolchildren] but I soon learnt my lesson."

He said that about 16 per cent of visitors to the museum were current patients who were able to empathise with the feelings expressed through the art both past and contemporary.

Bethlem has been housed at four sites since it was established in the Middle Ages on the spot where Liverpool Street station now stands in the City of London.

In 1815 it was moved to St George's Field, Southwark, in the imposing building people now know as the Imperial War Museum.

"The history of the hospital is the history of social attitudes to mental illness itself," Mr Phillips said. "Until the dissolution of the monasteries it was a problem that the Church had to deal with in the same way any medical problem was.

"There were periods when people felt that people with mental disorders are in some way responsible for their own affliction and at that time they were targets of fun."

Until 1770 people could come to the hospital to 'view' the patients like animals in a zoo.

Mr Phillips said: "That was an afternoon occupation at a time when others were public hangings and flogging of prostitutes.

"So it was not so different from the rest of the age. Public hanging was quashed a lot later than public visiting was stopped at the hospital."

It was in the 19th century that attitudes towards the mentally ill began to change, and engravings from the 1830s show patients wandering around freely in genteel surroundings with long galleries, flowers and birds in cages, Mr Phillips said.

Between 1815 and 1816 a Parliamentary inquiry into 'madhouses' including Bethlem revealed the shocking treatment and abuses of patients, who were being kept in chains and handcuffs in squalid conditions by untrained and overstretched staff.

It led to regular inspections of asylums and to the creation of the Commission of Lunacy in 1828, which oversaw the inspections and reported on them, like an early form of the Care Quality Commission.

Bethlem is now part of the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. For more details visit www.bethlemheritage.org.uk.

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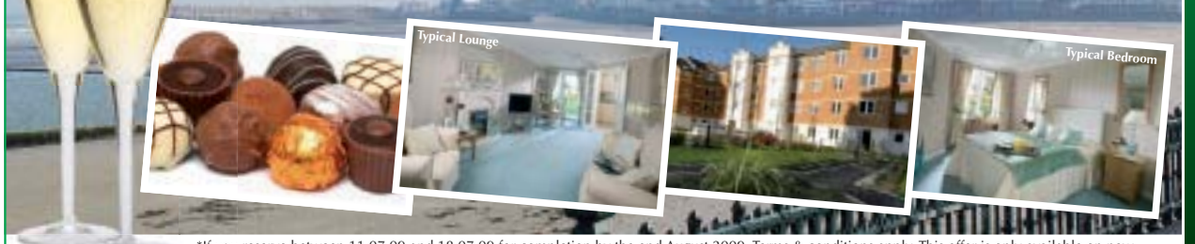

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England stars honour Kent cricketer's WWI grave

RESPECTFUL: Strauss

A KENT cricket player who died on a World War One battlefield was at the centre of a moving tribute from England's current Ashes squad.

The players went to Flanders Field last weekend, and while they were in Belgium they laid a stone cricket ball at the grave of England and Kent left-arm spinner Colin Blythe, who died at Passchendaele in 1917.

England captain Andrew Strauss said: "It was a deeply moving and humbling experience.

"It's important to take a step back from cricket at times.

"We learned a great deal about the sacrifices made by a previous generation of England cricketers and I would like to thank the people of Ieper (Ypres) for making us so welcome."

The idea behind the trip was to enlarge the players' understanding of world events.

Understanding

It was the brainchild of the team's managing director Hugh Morris and more visits are planned.

Mr Morris said of the secret visit: "This is part of the leadership programme we're running. It's an ongoing process. We want leaders on the field and we've heard stories about heroic deeds and leaders from a number of different people this weekend."

Team director Andy Flower said: "Everyone came away from the visit with a greater understanding of what it really means to stand shoulder to shoulder and fight for your country."

Colin, also known as Charlie, Blythe was born in Deptford, and went on to become one of the game's best bowlers between 1900-1914.

His impact on first-class cricket could not have been more spectacular when in 1899, he first played for Kent and took a wicket with his very first ball. He took 100 of them in a season.

In 1904, he was named as a Wisden Cricketer of the Year. Two years later, after winning 11 successive games thanks to his skill, Kent won their first County Championship.

He suffered from epilepsy, but still joined the Army when war broke out. He joined the King's Own Yorkshire Light Infantry and became a sergeant.

He was killed by random shell-fire on a railway between Pimmern and Forest Hall near Passchendaele on November 8, 1917.

He is buried in the Oxford Road CWGC Cemetery in Belgium.

Kent Highway Services

For information and advice on travelling in Kent, go to www.kent.gov.uk/highways

For all our Traffic Regulation Orders, please go to pages **65** & **66**

Stars Foundation for Cerebral Palsy

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The event will raise vital funds for the Martha Trust, a charity providing lifelong residential and respite care for people with profound and multiple disabilities in Kent and also The Stars Foundation for Cerebral Palsy a charity who raise funds to buy mobility, communication and educational aids.

If you would like further information or to register to play, please contact Serita Boxall **01304 610448** / seritaboxall@marthatrust.org.uk or visit **www.marthatrust.org.uk**

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Chart Hills

Woman forced to endure five years of abuse and suffering

By **CHRIS MURPHY**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

A RAPIST who subjected a woman to five years of abuse has been jailed for 14 years.

A shocked court was told Robert Smith's attacks on the 28-year-old women were sustained and he has been placed on the sex offenders' register for life.

Smith, 38, from Welling in Bexley, was convicted of four counts of rape, two counts of sexual assault, five counts of actual bodily harm, and one count of harassment when he put the helpless victim in fear of violence.

He was found guilty on June 3 after a trial at Woolwich Crown Court that lasted a month.

Sentencing was adjourned until last Friday for reports to be completed.

The judge jailed him for 14 years on the rape charges, six years for ABH, four years for the sexual assault, and two years for the count of harassment, all to be served concurrently.

Squeezed

Smith was told he'd be behind bars for at least seven years and if released will then be on licence for the remainder of his sentence.

However, he was warned that should he commit an offence while on licence he will be imprisoned for the remaining seven years.

The conviction follows an investigation by Bexley Police's Public Protection Group.

In one attack, Smith grabbed the victim by her hair and hit her head against a solid wooden headboard. He also grabbed her a second time and kicked her feet from under her, which resulted in her landing on the floor on her back.

Smith then took her by her hands and feet and lifted her and dropped her on the floor.

During another attack, he pulled her and pushed his thumbs into her eye sockets so hard she thought her eyes were going to pop out of her head, the court heard.

Police said she was covered in bruises and injuries. She was taken to hospital for treatment and was referred to an eye specialist.

The victim told officers she had been repeatedly assaulted over a five-year period.

BRUTAL: Smith attacked victim with an axe

Attacks included having a club hammer smashed against her thigh which left her hardly able to walk for a month.

Smith also held a knife to her throat, held her under water and cut her knee with an axe.

She passed out on two occasions when Smith squeezed her throat and pushed her face into a cushion. She was also repeatedly raped and sexually assaulted.

Smith has two previous assault convictions.

Sentencing, Judge Marcus Moore, told him: "You terrorised this woman over almost a six-year period and committed an appalling course of acts."

He also criticised Smith for sobbing while he gave evidence.

He told him he was manipulative, adding: "Whilst giving evidence you used tears to try to affect the jury, who had none of it."

And he added that it was "quite clear you have a problem dealing with women".

Afterwards, Det Con Mark McDonald, who led the investigation, said: "The victim showed immense courage in coming forward and reporting this harrowing and distressing chain of violence. Nobody should be subjected to such horrific physical and emotional pain."

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CHRIS BRITCHER
CAMPAIGN EDITOR
chris.britcher@kosmedia.co.uk

Flavour of summer is right on your doorstep

In the first part of a regular series of articles, healthy eating expert ABBY DYSON – who writes about cooking, seasonal, healthy food at www.eattherightstuff.com – discusses her recent visit to the county to experience the delights of Kentish tomatoes.

WITH the arrival of summer sunshine, I am eating more salads, and am thrilled that the British tomato season is upon us.

Although tomatoes are available throughout the year, it is only in recent weeks that local varieties have ripened and there really is no comparison between the flavourless tomatoes available during winter and the sweet, tangy and delicious British varieties.

If you're a gardener your tomato plants should be doing well and you'll soon see the first signs of flowers or fruit. If not, you need to track down some local Kentish tomatoes.

Those provided by www.foodforkent.co.uk are grown by Brian and Lorraine Watts, who run the Leonard Ironside nursery at Farthing Common, Lyminge, which I visited last month.

Brian has been growing tomatoes since 1974, and it was fascinating to find out what is involved.

His nursery comprises four, one-acre glasshouses, containing about 35,000 tomato plants. Brian currently grows 10 different varieties, ranging from traditional vine and plum to cherry and beef tomatoes. The tomato seedlings are planted in November in what looks like giant grow bags filled with coir, which is shredded coconut husk – a much more environmentally-sound choice than traditional peat.

Brian explained how the environment in the glasshouses is carefully monitored to create optimum growing conditions.

The temperature is varied depending on how bright a day it is – on sunny days the plants grow fast and need extra warmth, whereas on an overcast day less heat is required as they are growing more slowly.

Just as important is keeping the glasshouses well ventilated, so that disease, which flourishes in warm damp environments, is kept at bay and condensation doesn't form which might cause blemishes on the tomatoes. Carbon dioxide, a by-product of the heating system, is pumped into the glasshouses to encourage better growth.

One of the most interesting things about visiting the nursery was learning about the bugs and bees which Brian deploys to help him grow the tomatoes. Each glasshouse contains a number of bee hives housing bumble bees that pollinate the tomatoes.

Predators

This is a far cry from the techniques used in yesteryear, which saw farmers use a vibrating metal rod to "tickle" each flower so that the pollen was dislodged.

The bees are introduced when the first flowers appear – usually just after Christmas – and continue their work until the end of the growing season in the autumn.

Brian also uses predator insects. The plants are regularly inspected by white-coated scientists and any sign of pests is noted. Predator insects are then introduced which target and eliminate these pests.

It's a wonderful example of working with Mother Nature and as a result of this approach Brian's tomatoes are grown without the use of pesticides, fungicides or insecticides.

Each glasshouse contains 500 rows of tomatoes and from March, when the plants start producing fruit – it takes eight weeks from pollination to a tomato being ready to pick – each row is picked every other day, six days a week.

The tomatoes are put straight into the boxes in which they are sold so that they are handled as little as possible.

Unusually, they are not put into cold storage but go straight to the people who are buying them so that the time between picking and selling is kept short.

The result is flavoursome Kentish tomatoes which are well worth tracking down.

Brian's top tomato tips

- Store your tomatoes at room temperature so they can continue to ripen. This is particularly important if you buy vine tomatoes as there will always be one or two which ripen at a slower rate than the others.
- Eat your tomatoes at room temperatures and when they are as brightly coloured as possible – the brighter the colour, the better the flavour.
- Use tinned tomatoes in winter.

Abby's double tomato and courgette pasta

(Serves 2)
Pasta for two – penne works well
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 large clove garlic, crushed
2 courgettes, cut into discs
1 tablespoon of sun-dried tomatoes, softened in boiling water and cut into thin strips
Juice of half a lemon
15-20 cherry tomatoes, halved
A handful of basil leaves, shredded
1 tablespoon of toasted pine nuts
Parmesan cheese, to serve

Method

Put the pasta on to cook. Fry the garlic in olive oil and when you start to smell it, add the courgette.

Turn the heat up and cook, stirring regularly, until the courgette begins to soften.

Keep the heat high and add the sun-dried tomatoes and lemon juice and cook for a more few minutes.

When the courgette is sufficiently cooked add the cherry tomatoes, basil and pine nuts.

Remove from the heat, mix with the pasta and serve with parmesan shavings.

For more examples of seasonal recipes visit Abby's healthy eating food blog www.eattherightstuff.com

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foodforkent.co.uk We are committed to adding more local suppliers to our online service and any local business or producer that wishes to join our campaign should contact us at foodforkent.co.uk or email us at feedback@kosmedia.co.uk

KENT ON SUNDAY

COMMENT

Follow advice to ride out flu storm

THE rapid spread of swine flu in Kent will understandably be of concern to many.

A 300 per cent rise in cases in the last week is proof the virus can no longer be contained, but the message from all quarters is that there is still no need to panic.

God forbid that anyone catching swine flu should die, but the worst most of us will have to suffer is a week in bed.

Words such as pandemic make situations like this sound much worse than they are and the NHS is doing a fine job of keeping on top of things.

As with all diseases, we should be on our guard and take sensible precautions, but just because swine flu is a new strain that is spreading rapidly does not mean we are verging on disaster.

The best we can do is listen to the advice of the people who know best – the doctors and nurses who are more than capable of helping us ride out the storm.

A crazy display

COMEDIAN Vic Reeves is perhaps best known for his zany antics on the spoof BBC panel show Shooting Stars. So if you thought his hosting of an art exhibition in Tunbridge Wells meant his madcap ways were behind him, think again.

A display of stuffed animals flying out of a Victorian bath chair proves Bob Mortimer's comedy partner is still well and truly off his rocker.

OPINION: Living life to the full

Those with learning disabilities have the right to independence, genuine choice, and equality believes Cllr Graham Gibbens

ACCORDING to the statistics, one in 40 people in Kent has a learning disability. That's about 35,000, roughly the number of people living in a medium-size town.

Last Sunday was the last day of Learning Disability Week. It was an important week for everyone involved in supporting those with learning disabilities; a chance to talk about what we do, why it's important and the difference it makes. About 3,500 people with learning disabilities are known to Kent Adult Social Services. Not everyone who meets the criteria for support has made themselves known and many rely on family and friends for support. This is is especially true among some ethnic minorities. Some people might not even realise they have a learning disability. So what is it?

Mencap says people with a learning disability find it harder than others to learn, understand and communicate. There are many different types and most develop before a baby is born, during birth or because of a serious illness in early childhood.

Down's syndrome, fragile X syndrome or Prader-Willi syndrome are examples of learning disabilities. Helping people with a learning disability and giving them the support they need in the way they want is immensely satisfying. Many want the opportunity to learn, train and work.

People with learning disabilities have a range of skills and needs. Some only need an occasional visit and help with correspondence or finances, while others need help in all aspects of day to day life. Making sure carers have the right backing is an essential part of offering support.

It is important that KCC looks after carers, helping them get the support and benefits they're entitled to as well as making sure carers know where they can get respite care. The importance of carers cannot be overstated and I know they make an enormous difference to so many people.

Recently, Kent on Sunday told the story of Michael Catt, who loves the way in which his job gives him independence.

Another example is Sue Dixon from Canterbury, whose experience of living with a learning disability changed when she got support from the independent living team at KCC. She said: "Now, I work part-time in a playgroup and I have helped set up and run a disco. I've also organised a quiz night, setting questions and being the quiz master.

"People have noticed I've changed. I'm more confident and happier, I manage things much better and am stronger."

Steven Chapman, co-chair of the Kent learning disability partnership board, said: "For lots of people with learning disabilities, life has changed for the better. I used to live on benefits but now work full-time. This has been difficult at times, but with support my life has changed."

These stories really show the impact of supporting people with learning disabilities – although that support has to happen in the right way. Along with all organisations that help people with a learning disability, KCC follows four guiding principles:

- Rights: people with learning disabilities have the same rights as other citizens.
- Independence: we should support them to be independent, rather than dependant.
- Choice: They need real choices – including those with severe and profound disabilities.
- Inclusion: people with learning disabilities need to be fully included in their community.

In Kent, we are working with colleagues in the NHS, the private and voluntary sector, police, schools, colleges, leisure services, shops, business owners and entrepreneurs to make sure people with learning disabilities are seen as equal citizens, with the same opportunities in life.

Last month saw the launch of Valuing Employment Now, the Government's latest initiative to support people with learning disabilities and helping them get into work. Kent is leading the way in supporting people with more complex disabilities as they make a life of their own.

The principles we are working to are big and challenging, but I'm glad they are. I want KCC to be doing everything it can to make sure people with learning disabilities get the most they can out of life. It's not about doing things for them or shutting people away, it's about making Kent a welcoming place in which to live, work and learn. I want to make sure people with learning disabilities live life to the full.

• ***Cllr Graham Gibbens is KCC cabinet member for adult social services.***

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Summer savings for our readers

COMPANIES' traditionally fight their battles against rival firms in the same sector.

But in the current economic situation, firms with an eye on the future are equally engaged with a fight against the conditions in the marketplace.

In this latest edition of Money Matters we offer some advice from the experts on how firms can keep themselves fighting fit by taking steps to avoid becoming the vicitms of fraudsters – from inside and outside the organisation.

There are also some top tips for individuals planning their pensions, and individuals looking for a safe place for their savings. Gold is making a comeback, and you may soon even be able to buy it from a vending machine.

We also feature some of the many money-saving offfers avaialable at vouchersforkent.co.uk. There are offers for leisure, food and drink; motors and servicing; retail trades and services; and also from members of the Canterbury Independent Traders.

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- Chart Hills Golf Club in Biddenden is offering 10 per cent off all food and beverages
- Robins and Day Maidstone Motor Dealer in Canterbury is offering £29.99 services and MOTs from £119.99
- KOS is offering a Pulsar military-style chronograph watch. Save £20 – offer price £49.99, RRP £69.99

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Is there fraud in your business?

By **ANDREW JONES**

BUSINESS need to be aware of fraud at all levels.

The exposés on MPs' expenses should serve as a warning to business managers that fraudulent activity could be happening much closer to home than they might realise.

With the continuing uncertain economic outlook it is vital the risks are actively managed.

When dealing with the likely sources of fraud it is more often people inside the business that are the culprits, and managers should pay as much attention to the internal risks as the external ones.

There are some simple issues that can be addressed which may prevent fraud from occurring. Establishing correct internal checks and balances, which are both sensible and in proportion with the associated risks, will go some way to ensuring the most vulnerable areas are covered.

In addition to assessing the risk factors, there are other important tips that can help a business detect and prevent fraud:

• Know your people – both staff and contractors, and if something doesn't quite add up, ask more questions.

• Training – ensure that once the risks have been identified, staff are trained to spot and prevent attempted fraud.

• Unusual behaviour or transactions – long hours, no holidays and living beyond their means may be signs of fraudulent behaviour. Likewise large amounts of petty cash transactions or unusual expenses could be evidence.

However, just because none of these signs is evident does not mean fraud is not present.

If a business believes it might have become the victim of fraud, the evidence must be secured and there should be a well-rehearsed plan in place to allow all options to be investigated.

Taking early action and speaking to experts in the fraud arena can often make a big difference in fully understanding what has happened.

By successfully identifying and dealing with the fraudsters, recovering what has been lost and learning lessons to reduce the chances of it happening again will all help.

Accountants and business advisers Baker Tilly has offices in Bromley and Tunbridge Wells.

Its Southern region forensic services director Bill White said: "Fraud is becoming increasingly common, particularly in today's uncertain economic conditions.

"Both businesses, and the people who work in them, are under increasing pressure to perform and therefore the temptation to try and gain funds dishonestly may only be a step away.

"At Baker Tilly we have a team of experienced forensic experts who can advise on all aspects of corporate fraud.

"We often find that businesses don't always know where to look for help or who to speak to when fraud has been uncovered, but it is important to take early advice."

AWARE: When dealing with the likely sources of fraud it is more often people inside the business that are the culprits

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Picture: JULES SERKIN

SURVIVOR'S MESSAGE: IT consultant and director of HDG Networks Ltd, Jonathan Gwyer

Refusing to be bowed or beaten

By **TONY PATEY**

WHITSTABLE businessman Jonathan Gwyer is not allowing the current economic crisis to get him down.

Mr Gwyer, 37, wears a badge that states: 'I refuse to participate in a recession.' And he wants more people to do the same.

He said: "It seems some people have written off the year. We are still proactive and positive."

As an IT consultant and director of HDG Networks Ltd, the father-of-four is also chapter director of the local BNI, a business networking body.

Mr Gwyer admits there have been some hairy moments through the financial problems of the past year "like the moment Iceland's Icesave bank went into receivership.

"That was just before Christmas, and all of our capital was in that bank. We were very relieved when the Government rescued depositors."

At a time now when many large and small businesses are struggling, HDG Networks is confident that it can still be business as usual.

"I am finding that as a smaller business with lower overheads, we are getting work with companies that are trying to grow while keeping costs down.

"In a recent job, I was called in and the company in question had been quoted more than £4,000 for an expansion of their IT system.

"We were able to give them a more bespoke solution, and it wasn't necessary for them to spend anywhere near so much money. They were delighted.

BNI
I refuse to participate in a recession.

"In a crisis such as this, businesses must adapt and we will do what it takes.

"We're doing everything from installing wireless and broadband in homes or offices, to building websites, teaching people how to run their own website or breathing new life into old PCs, in fact pretty much any kind of IT support."

Mr Gwyer set up HDG Networks in 2007, after 16 years at the drugs giant Pfizer in Sandwich.

He said: "I knew I could offer small businesses the kind of support that big business demands but within their own budgets.

"My wife, Helen, supported me all the way with my decision, I think she wondered what took me so long."

To find out how you can get your own badge, contact Mr Gwyer at www.hdgnet.com.

Business of identity theft

If you think identity theft only applies to individuals, then think again. **David Hallett**, a solicitor in the commercial team at Kent law firm Buss Murton, analyses corporate identity theft in the county

ONE of our clients had its registered office changed without the company's knowledge.

This was done by someone simply printing off a filed form with the company secretary's name on and then tracing the signature onto form 287, enabling the change of registered office. The address remained changed for a period of some 14 days before the fraud was discovered by the company's auditors on a routine visit and corrective action taken.

The threat

Companies House estimates that there are between 50-100 cases of corporate identity fraud every month. While this is against a backdrop of tens of thousands of documents received each month, the cost incurred by British business as a result of corporate identity fraud has been estimated at more than £50 million each year.

Obtaining or changing a company's identity is surprisingly straightforward.

For example, a fraudster may file a change of registered office notice or change of directors' details at Companies House by signing one simple form. No great legal knowledge is required and copies of a serving company officer's signature are readily available from Companies House.

They accept paper documentation in 'good faith' and as such, will register documentation received without sending any further notification to a company that its details have been changed.

It is perfectly possible therefore, for a fraudster to appoint him or herself as a director of a target company, or alternatively change the target company's registered office address to one which the fraudster has access.

Once the registered office address has been successfully changed, all Companies House notices will be sent there.

Even worse, a customer or supplier may only send money or goods to the new registered office address as a matter of policy rather than sending those goods or money to the company's established trading address.

The fraudster only needs to be successful once at intercepting money or goods before targeting another company. Inevitably, by the time the company or authorities learn of the fraudulent activity, the fraudster will have moved and the postal address will be vacant.

The solution

However, there are procedures that can be put in place that will help to dramatically reduce the threat of identity fraud. These include:

1. Online filing. Every UK company is able to register for an authentication code (much like a pin number) with Companies House. Upon registration for this code a company is then able to submit certain documents (such as the annual return, 288a (appointment of a director) and 287 (change of registered office address) online. The use of online filing substantially reduces the risk of such documents going astray in the postal system.

2. PROOF scheme. Once a company has obtained an authentication code from Companies House, the company can then sign up to the Protected Online Filing Service (known as PROOF). Once signed up (using form PR1), Companies House will then not accept paper copies of the forms listed under point 1 above. These documents will only be accepted electronically (submitted using the authentication code). Therefore, provided the authentication code is kept safe and treated as if it were a bank account pin number, then the chances of a fraudster being able to change a company's identity are dramatically reduced.

3. Monitor. Companies or individuals can register so that they are automatically notified of all changes that occur to a company's details held at Companies House. The cost of this service can be as little as 50p per year. Once signed up to a monitoring service, the nominated individual will receive an automatic update as soon as Companies House accepts and files a document in relation to a chosen company.

In addition to this, company information should always be stored securely and any information that is to be destroyed should be done so securely (as you would when destroying personal information such as your bank statements).

• David Hallett is a solicitor in Buss Murton LLP's company and commercial department in Tunbridge Wells. He can be contacted at the firm's Tunbridge Wells office on 01892 502306.

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- Village Hotel in Maidstone is offering a free bowl of strawberries and cream when you buy a two course meal in the Victory Pub
- JC Farley furniture store in Ramsgate is offering half-price duvet and pillows with every bed purchased
- Northgate Alfa Motor Dealer in Canterbury is offering fixed-price servicing for cars three years plus. Bronze Care Petrol or Diesel £109
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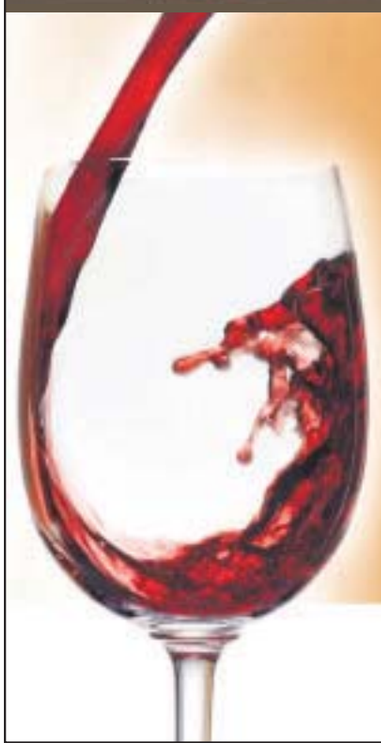

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

A timely code for

Big businesses make a pledge to increase the speed of payments to smaller companies

BY **TONY PATEY**

CREDIT management experts have welcomed a pledge from big businesses to pay invoices from supplies on time.

The Institute of Credit Management (ICM) said it hoped the companies would live up to their word to pay on time and sign the Prompt Payment Code.

Some 11 new high-profile companies including Barclays, Sony UK, Sky and B&Q have committed to sign the code, as part of a campaign designed to help increase the speed of payments to smaller companies.

The code, developed with the ICM and supported by major business organisations, aims to establish a clear and consistent policy, and a climate of greater certainty in the payment of business-to-business invoices.

It is being hosted by the ICM at www.promptpaymentcode.org.uk and includes a facility for suppliers to raise concerns about late payers.

The code focuses on three main areas: a commitment to pay suppliers on time; to give clear guidance to suppliers; and to encourage good practice.

The Business Enterprise and Regulatory Reform group and the ICM have also issued a leaflet highlighting the benefits of paying on time and why it is important to become a signatory to the Prompt Payment Code.

Business minister Shriti Vadera said: "Late payment can be the final straw for small business in the current climate.

"So the commitment by major companies heading up supply chains to pay on time is a win for all businesses."

Lovetts, one of the UK's leading debt recovery law firms has revealed that companies are 'going legal' on unpaid invoices a whopping 39 days sooner than a year ago.

The findings suggest that in the current economic downturn, businesses are only too mindful of the impact of late payments on cash flow and are acting quickly to reduce their exposure to bad debt.

Survival

Lovetts analysed the Letters Before Action (LBAs) issued on behalf of its customers in February 2009 against the same month in 2008, which revealed a 39-day acceleration in clients 'going legal'. LBAs are used to secure payment, or to obtain a response from a customer before the commencement of a claim.

Chairman and managing director of Lovetts, Charles Wilson, said: "With recent news that the number of British businesses that fail is set to rise to 36,000 in 2009, the equivalent of one in every 56 companies, businesses are only too acutely aware of the potential for bad debt and the devastating impact this can have on their own survival.

"With all businesses trying to manage cash flow when there is little credit available, it's a spiral of suppliers chasing customers for money they are reluctant to release.

"The previous attitude towards frequent late payers may have been accepting and forgiving, but the current tough climate is pushing businesses to press for payment on time in order to protect themselves.

"Our figures certainly suggest that British businesses are determined not to be victims of bad debt and will employ all the tactics available to get paid, including pursuing debt through the courts.

"In particular it is encouraging to see that a growing number of companies are exercising their right to charge for compensation and interest on late payments.

"In this economic climate businesses need to ensure they are tackling late payment and bad debt head on. For small businesses in particular, it can be a matter of survival or failure."

To keep the cash flowing Lovetts suggests businesses consider the following actions:

late payers

SURVIVAL: Paying on time can be vital to help small companies survive the recession

• Bring your collection cycle forward, the sooner you get on top of potential debt problems, the better

• Seek compensation and interest through late payment legislation earlier and apply it on an invoice-by-invoice basis

• If you have interest provisions in your terms, consider whether they are sufficiently robust. Businesses with a rate linked to bank base rates are vulnerable here. Scrap the provision and rely on the 'late payment' legislation which gives eight per cent interest over base rate, but don't forget to circulate the new terms to your customers.

• Instruct debt recovery lawyers early

• Avoid throwing good money after bad by conducting a credit-check. If the debtor is clearly struggling, negotiate realistic instalment payments or consider a discount for immediate payment.

• If the decision is to issue a claim, be resolute in pursuing it. If the debtor asks for invoices, supply copies and any information they want quickly.

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Pensions are put under pressure

By **JEREMY GATES**

WHEN two of Britain's leading firms announced big cutbacks to company pension schemes last month, they highlighted once again the problems facing millions of private-sector workers when they stop work.

BP closes its final salary pension scheme to new entrants from April, 2010, while Barclays Bank is taking 18,000 staff out of its final-salary scheme and into an inferior defined contributions (DC) scheme, albeit with some protection against swings in the stock market.

Barclays currently pays £350 million a year into its pension fund.

Although both schemes will be superior to the average company DC scheme, the events suggest final-salary schemes could soon vanish altogether in the private sector.

Britain's biggest FTSE 100 companies, facing total pension fund deficits of nearly £30 billion, have little option if they are to survive the recession.

Morrisons last month switched 4,500 workers from a final-salary pension scheme into one based on average salary , while BT's share price continues to suffer from fears about its huge pension fund deficit.

Nearly three-quarters of a million British workers retire in 2009 and with the value of pensions assets held around the world slashed by more than £3bn since 2007, many will have trouble making ends meet.

A survey of people aged 60-plus by Intune, the financial services provider owned by Age Concern and Help The Aged, says 55 per cent of private pension holders are disappointed with the income they expect to get.

If they could do it all again, some 39 per cent would have started a pension earlier or paid more into it. Many would have switched pension contributions into a savings account or an ISA investment, or paid the mortgage off much faster.

Mervyn Kohler, special advisor to Age Concern and Help The Aged, said: "Around 680,000 people are hitting retirement age this year, and more may be looking at buying an annuity earlier because they have been made redundant."

The downturn is savaging private sector pensions. Anybody with a £50,000 pension pot retiring in 2009 will be 27 per cent worse off – around £20 per week – than somebody who quit in 2008.

Laith Khalaf, pensions analyst at financial advisor Hargreaves Lansdown, said: 'Many firms are likely to follow Barclays and BP over the next two years, although the new BP scheme, with total contributions at 15 per cent of salary, will still be pretty good.

Struggling

"As they see the markets recover, firms will close off final salary schemes to ensure they do not hit another downturn with that millstone around their necks."

Approaching 60, most people can do little about their pension income. By then, it's too late.

At 30 or 40, however, there is still time to make sensible financial preparations for old age.

If you start saving for a pension at 25, about 15 per cent of salary should go into a pension pot. At 35, it should be 20 per cent, and thereafter a higher percentage, the later you start.

In fact, the average contribution into private-sector pensions is barely 10 per cent – and two-thirds of private-sector workers have no personal pension scheme in place at all.

Here are the options for workers struggling to find value for money from a private-sector pension scheme:

- Give up – don't put a penny in your pension. Anybody retiring on the basic State pension (£95.25 per week) and no other savings can claim Pension Credit for £130 per week.
- Once you're in a pension scheme, stick at it – because your employer probably tops up your monthly contribution.
- However, if your employer's scheme isn't particularly attractive, put other money into an alternative savings vehicle – a tax-free ISA perhaps, or alternative personal pension, or even a Self Invested Personal Pension (SIPP) which allows a wider choice of funds, chosen with or without expert advice.
- Drawdown option: if your fund is a minimum £100,000 and you have other savings besides your pension, there may be a case for taking the 25 per cent tax-free lump sum on retirement and leaving the rest invested.

Then you buy an annuity at any time you like until the age of 75.

- Delay your State pension, rather than your private one. On your State pension, each one-year delay adds 10.4 per cent to weekly income – so a £100 pension is worth £110.40 if it was started a year ago. If you defer a State pension at 65 for one year, you make up all the money lost by age 76.
- Don't rush off to the public sector, where pensions provision is more generous and guaranteed by the taxpayers.

Even though five million public-sector workers are still guaranteed final salary pensions, there's a possibility hard-up governments will have to cut the 'perk' in due course because it will look ridiculously unfair compared to the problems already facing private-sector workers.

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Golden times for savvy savers

BY **JEREMY GATES**

ANY savers and investors unsettled by the recent disagreement between the Governor of the Bank of England and the Chancellor of the Exchequer over financial regulation might be consulting their budget-airline timetables.

It was confirmed last week that Germany will introduce gold vending-machines as a new method of storing wealth.

While gloomy Britons contemplate poor returns on cash and shares, shoppers at Frankfurt Airport can buy a one-gram wafer of gold for £25, or a 10g bar for £245 – with gold coins also available if required.

"German investors have always preferred to hold a lot of personal wealth in gold, for historical reasons. They have twice lost everything," the owner of the firm installing 500 Gold to Go machines in German-speaking countries told the Financial Times.

But with gold prices from machines about 30 per cent higher than market prices for the cheapest product, even Germans – who bought 108 tonnes of gold in 2008, up from 36 tonnes in 2007 – might have doubts about this new scheme.

Few dispute, however, that gold has been a strong performer in recent financial earthquakes.

Adrian Ash, head of research at BullionVault, an online service for gold bullion investment with 14,000 private investors worldwide, said somebody selling a home at the average price in Britain in 2004 could have bought 695 ounces of gold (at £220 per ounce) with the cash.

Today, with gold up to £603 an ounce, they could buy the average-price home back for 253 ounces. Or they could sell all the gold to buy 2.7 average-price houses.

In the intervening period, of course, they would have needed to stay with friends or family. Even 695 ounces of gold doesn't put a roof over your head.

"Real interest rates in the UK have averaged just 1.8 per cent so far this decade – barely two-fifths the real return on cash in the 1980s and 1990s," Ash explained.

"The gold price in sterling, in contrast, has risen fourfold and more, as money's competitive edge as a store of wealth has been steadily eroded. Physical gold ownership looks attractive to individuals worried about the future of savings.

BANKER: The financial attractions of gold investment are likely to increase

"Gold's appeal is only likely to grow until real returns paid to cash turn sharply higher."

Financial advisor Hargreaves Lansdown (HL) leaves share tips off the front page of its latest newsletter to small clients, and makes a case for gold instead.

"Given the current economic environment, it is time to revisit the merits or otherwise of the 'yellow metal'," says HL's Richard Hunter.

"It has proved a remarkably resilient store of value over hundreds of years, and in addition is an asset where investors seek protection when they need it most."

He notes the net inflow of funds into all types of gold investment soared 80 per cent to a record £18 billion in 2008, despite falling demand for gold jewellery in India and the Middle East.

Many of HL's small investors use the BlackRock Gold & General fund to gain exposure to gold markets. It holds shares in 40-70 companies, most of them gold producers.

"It is realistic to have five per cent of your long-term savings in this fund," says HL's Mark Dampier.

"Gold may be a fickle animal, but given serious geopolitical and economic problems, there is reason to see gold prices going significantly higher from here."

There are various way for individuals to hold gold: Exchange Traded Funds, jewellery, coins (sovereigns or krugerrands) and bars, or derivatives which track gold prices among them.

Mining shares are another option. Hunter reckons a five per cent rise in gold prices triggers a 10-15 per cent hike in share prices, though this effect works equally strongly in the opposite direction.

At discount broker Killik & Co, analyst Mike Gilligan says: "Investor scepticism about the rationale for gold investment is valid, given that it is a non-income-producing asset hard to value from a fundamental perspective.

"However, the macroeconomic case for higher gold prices remains intact.

"The recent spike in gold prices on the back of plans for US quantitative easing serves to reinforce our view that gold will serve as an insurance policy against inflationary pressures and/or economic dislocation."

Volatile

Gilligan thinks gold demand could soar if Japan and China eventually reduce their vast dollar surpluses.

Frank Cochran, at financial advisor FSC Investment Services, notes that BlackRock Gold and General has performed "out of its skin".

"Available data suggests gold prices going higher from here," he said.

"In a high-risk portfolio, we might have 25 per cent in this fund. Lower-risk investors prefer five-10 per cent. The fund is a long-term hold, for capital growth rather than income."

The downside is that gold's price remains highly volatile: since February, for example, the price has dropped from £700 to £576 per ounce, a fall of 18 per cent.

If Chancellor Alistair Darling has it right, the 'green shoots' of recovery might return us to a financial world we know and understand.

If it doesn't, the attractions of gold are likely to increase, even if few of us are ready to buy at a vending-machine.

Red tape, a growing cost for businesses

BY **ANDREW JONES**

SMALL businesses in the South East lose more than £1.4 billion every year due to government red tape, new figures have shown.

Research carried out by small business lobby and support group the Forum of Private Business (FPB) found firms in the region spend around £1,403 million each year complying with legislation – the highest amount for any region in the UK.

The figure, drawn up using feedback from FPB members, means entrepreneurs in the South East face the biggest bill in the country for carrying out the paperwork associated with running a small business.

The £1.4bn figure for the region, based on the amount of company time and money spent complying with the rules, includes £309m spent on health and safety legislation, £361m spent dealing with paperwork on employment law and £37m on dismissals and redundancy.

The work associated with staff absences cost £59m, costs associated with maternity came in at £36m and the work related to disciplinary issues was worked out at £49m.

FPB spokesman Matt Goodman said: "Our research shows complying with red tape remains one of the major cost burdens facing smaller businesses, swallowing up valuable time and money that could be used more profitably elsewhere.

"In addition, at a time when protecting both workers and businesses should be a priority, regulations are increasingly burdensome as businesses take on more staff."

Micro businesses (zero to nine employees) spend an average of 33 hours per month complying with regulations, small businesses (10 to 49 employees) 48 hours per month and medium-sized companies (50 to 249 employers) 131 hours – equivalent to one full-time member of staff.

Employment law is the costliest bureaucratic burden, costing small businesses £2.4bn per year. Health and safety administration costs £2.1bn and tax £1.8bn per year, according to the FPB's research.

The average time per month spent on employment red tape (dismissals and redundancy, discipline, absence controls and management, parental leave, and holidays) is ten hours. For health and safety, it is eight hours.

Business owners spend an average of seven hours each month on tax administration, four on building and property regulations, four on standards, three on environment and waste regulations, and an hour per month on equality and diversity.

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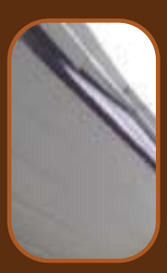
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Making it your job

How to convince companies you are the right person for the post

WITH jobless figures still rising, you never know when you might need to find a new job and it helps to have some expert advice on how to wow your next employer.

Damian Hayes, head of permanent IT recruitment at Bromley-based recruitment consultancy NetworkersMSB has some tips on how to nail your next role.

New research suggests that on average 16 people are chasing every job in the UK, up from a figure of 10 quoted by the TUC earlier this year.

The number of applicants for low-skilled jobs has also rocketed, with some advertisements attracting hundreds of candidates. Now more than ever it is important to make sure you stand out from the crowd.

Recruiters have seen a marked change in employers' demands lately; many are raising the bar higher than ever before.

Only last year, for example, candidates ticking eight out of 10 boxes for technical skills would have been offered the job but today, fulfilling the technical criteria is a given.

Employers are now placing just as much importance on how well you will fit in to their company and whether you have great communication and interpersonal skills.

Gain a New Skill

If you have time to gain a new qualification or learn a new skill, it will often give you the edge over another candidate with equal experience.

Achieving an additional qualification shows drive and ambition and when companies are becoming leaner and every member of staff is vital, it demonstrates you have the necessary commitment and motivation to get the job done.

Options might be completing an industry or vocational qualification, a business diploma or degree, or simply bringing your IT or language skills up to date.

Transferable Skills

Transferable skills are generic skills you are using every day, such as numeracy, IT literacy, sales or being able to work as part of a team.

Thinking about which of these skills you have might suggest alternative jobs that you could do or a different career path.

For example, someone with strong coaching or presentation experience could consider retraining as a teacher.

It is also worth considering other professions that use similar skill sets to your present job.

Learn a Language

Being able to speak a language can put you at an advantage, particularly if you're applying to work for a global company or for a job that involves travel abroad.

So, this could be the time to brush up on your schoolboy French or German.

Added Value

Remember to sell yourself and not your job title on your CV. All too often CVs just list previous job titles and responsibilities.

Use the opportunity to illustrate the added value you brought to the role (and can bring to a new one) – such as by introducing a new system to save energy, improving filing, boosting productivity or simply just making the workplace run more smoothly.

Once you've made it to an interview then you have the chance to shine. Make sure you have a good knowledge of the company and its products or services.

Demonstrate a good understanding of what makes the firm tick – its values and ethos – and show how well you would fit into its environment.

Looking Further Afield

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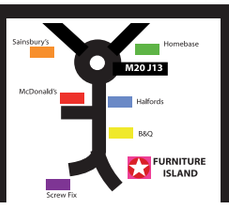

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Businesses' cash flow

By **TONY PATEY**

BUSINESS owners and managers across Kent are reducing costs, becoming more transparent, and investing in customer service in a bid to keep clients happy and avoid losing valuable business.

That's the picture revealed by new research from independent invoice financier Bibby Financial Services.

While it's not surprising that nearly two thirds (61 per cent) of business owners in the South East are actively pursuing new business as a priority to ride out the downturn, many (55 per cent) appreciate the importance of protecting existing revenue by upping customer service levels.

Transparent

And, more than a third (42 per cent) of the region's business owners are actually increasing their spending on hospitality as a means of retaining existing customers.

In fact, with 44 per cent of small and medium-sized businesses in the South East under pressure from customers to reduce their costs, more than half (56 per cent) of business owners were in the process of trying to balance the books by negotiating better terms with their own suppliers.

The research also revealed one in three business owners in the South East are now more transparent with clients and customers, for example giving them an insight into future business plans.

Despite their best efforts to take control of their firm in these unsettling times, effectively managing late payment and improving cash flow is still a major concern for 60 per cent of SME owners in the region.

Bibby Financial Services South East spokesman Andy Leopold said: "The drive for new business is all very well, but not if you're putting your all-important existing client base at risk at the same time.

"While it's promising to see the measures South East businesses are putting in place to survive the recession – ones which will also set them in good stead for long-term success – it is clear cash flow is still a major priority for businesses.

"Although the Government has now introduced several measures aimed at increasing cash flow to small businesses, few of them really seem to be taking hold, not least because the banks are themselves still struggling with liquidity issues.

"The important thing is for business owners in the region to look at all aspects of their cash flow situation, whether they need to tackle increasing late payment, or whether they need to change their pricing structure to stimulate client interest."

In most cases, newer business owners, for example those operating since 2006, are more likely to be open and transparent with clients and customers about their situation and future business plans, and least likely to be making changes in relation to cash flow.

Indeed, business owners without experience of previous recessions are least prepared to reduce costs for clients or customers.

In contrast, those who've been running their business for longer and have experienced several other recessions are more likely to view financial changes as a way to get

KEEPING GOING: Business owners and their managers are reducing costs as they try to keep hold of customers through the current econmic climate. Research has also revealed that more than half of businesses (55 per cent) were appreciating the importance of protecting their existing revenue by improving their levels of customer service (far right)

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their business through the recession.

When it comes to business sectors, those in transport are most likely to be following the cash is king mantra, with 86 per cent looking at managing late payment and improving cash flow, compared to just 46 per cent in the hotel and catering sector.

Mr Leopold said: "Irrespective of your experience, whether you're a new business owner or more practised, cash flow should always be your key priority.

"It is worth looking at all potential ways to improve this, whether it be taking measures to improve client retention, negotiating supply chain deals, or even simply reviewing your finances.

"Taking steps such as talking to your bank to apply for an increased overdraft facility – though at the moment this could be easier said than done – or looking at other cash flow options, such as invoice finance, which frees up the value held in your outstanding invoices, will ensure you are able to focus efforts on getting your business through the recession."

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TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY TO ALL OFFERS

Buy a car to save cash

BY **STEVE LOADER**

IT MIGHT sound mad to buy a new car during a recession.

But with savings accounts earning so little, you will be surprised by what you can earn by waving your wad around in the car trade, where business has plummeted over the past year.

Fact is, there has been much hype about the Government-sponsored Scrappage scheme launched in May (see later story), but there have been hefty discounts available on most new cars for months now – whether you have a 10-year-old 'scrapper' to trade or not.

Discounted

Even if, after raiding the bank account and teasing the dealer, your cash does not stretch to the discounted asking price, there are other deals that can be factored in, such as zero or low rate finance.

And don't forget to ask for trimmings like a tank of fuel, car mats or discounts on any little add-ons you might fancy.

Do your homework though to ensure you are not buying a car on 'run-out', where production or importing ceased a while ago, or one with the wrong engine.

After all, with fuel prices continuing to be volatile, you don't want to trade in your old gas guzzler for another just as bad.

Buy wisely though and your new vehicle could save on fuel, insurance, road tax and even depreciation, though cars will always devalue – unless they achieve classic status.

You can also afford to congratulate yourself for offloading something less efficient in favour of a modern and more eco-friendly model.

GO GREEN: Enjoy the space and luxury of a greener big car like the new Vauxhall Insignia ecoFLEX rather than downsize, but check the higher purchase cost against lower running costs – you might be better off with the conventional Insignia equivalent

On the other hand, review what you have to part-exchange; you might have lost tons on that big 4x4, but work out what it will cost you to run it for the next three years – it might be a lot less than the cost of chopping it for a new car.

Road tax might also favour downsizing to a more efficient motor – gas guzzling limos or 4x4s face £950 a year road tax from next year – but road tax is still a relatively small part of the motoring budget for most of us.

Many superminis sit in the lowest road tax band of £35 a year and though you might be tempted by new tax-exempt diesel eco models, just check the price against a standard version of the same car.

The eco supermini might save you £105 in road tax over three years, but how much will you pay upfront for it? A lot more.

So, check out conventional equivalents of eco models and don't dismiss petrol power; that fuel is still cheaper and makes sense for lower mileage users, while emission and consumption levels are closing the gap on heavier diesel equivalents.

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Price correct at time of going to press and specification is subject to change without notice. *5-year unlimited mileage warranty. **Model shown is Kia Soul Samba 1.6 Petrol @ £12,495.00 On The Road (OTR). OTR price includes VAT, number plates, delivery, 12 months' Government Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) and Vehicle First Registration Fee. Metallic paint option available for an additional £375 inc. VAT. Finance is available subject to status to UK residents aged over 18. Guarantees / indemnities may be required. Terms and conditions apply. Finance is provided by Santander Consumer (UK) plc, a trading name of Santander Consumer Finance, registered in England (No. 2248870) at 3 Princess Way, Redhill, Surrey RH1 1SR. Offer available between 01/04/09 and 31/07/09, subject to availability. Available to retail customers only.

Government's scrapheap challenge has taken flight

BY **STEVE LOADER**

IT WAS a dodgy take-off, but the Government's £2,000-a-go incentive to scrap older cars in return for new ones is now flying.

Applications have boomed, prompting fears that the £300 million fund set aside by the Treasury could be exhausted before the official cut-off date next March.

There is some talk of a top-up donation, but if you are considering swapping your banger then get your new car order in now – firm orders will be honoured even if the delivery of the new car is delayed.

The donor car must have been registered before August 31, 1999 and your name must have been on the V5 'logbook' for 12 months before the date your new car order is placed.

For their part, carmakers have mostly embraced the deal after initial disappointment that they would be expected to contribute half of each '£2,000 Government Scrappage grant' and noting that the Treasury would claw back some of its money through VAT on each car sale.

Some brands have even put extra money on the table on top of their £1,000 per unit as well as extra specification and zero per cent finance – though this is no longer a big deal when interest rates are so low.

BUDGET BUYS: The Government-sponsored Scrappage scheme has made newly-arrived small hatchbacks like the exotic Alfa Romeo MiTo (above) and Nissan Pixo city car (left) attractive to budget-conscious motorists with a banger to trade in

On the other hand, consumers with savings will know they are receiving precious little return and it is tempting to seek a psychological boost from buying a new motor that should be cheaper to fuel and tax.

And don't be despondent if you're not in a position to take advantage of Scrappage; with the exception of city cars and superminis, you should get a hefty discount on most new cars in the current climate without needing a banger to scrap.

If you have been out of the car market for a while though, do your research. You will have heard that diesel cars now outsell petrol, but that is not the full picture.

They cost more and the extra weight can be wearing and intrusive in the smaller cars most in demand now and you need to cover many miles to recover the extra upfront outlay.

Meanwhile, petrol is making a comeback with lighter, small capacity turbocharged engines able to deliver diesel pulling power and lower emissions.

You might also consider a hybrid, but these cost more and this must also be weighed against the mileage you intend to cover.

Essential guide to where you can save

- JC Farley furiture store in Ramsgate is offering a free dishwasher with every kitchen order over £7,000
- Living Out log cabins shop in Chestfield, Maidstone, is offering 10 per cent off everything
- Furniture Island in Folkestone is offering an extra five per cent off all garden furniture
- Secure Style windows doors and conservatories store in Herne Bay is offering 30 per cent off conservatories
- Bourne Road Motor Dealer in Crayford is offering free car mats with all Mazda purchases new and used
- Decorators Choice in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off all paints
- The Orchard Restaurant in Maidstone is offering Kids Eat for Free
- Hazel Motors in Chatham is offering £20 off air conditioning
- KOS is offering a Karcher pressure washer kit at £99.99 including free accessories, save £116 on RRP
- KOS is offering Snugfit mattress topper from Slumberdown from only £69.99, save up to £40. Various sizes available
- KOS is offering five Global knives set, scissors and block. Only £199.99, saving £150 off the RRP
- KOS is offering big button digital cordless phone for just £24.99, save £20

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Drive smarter to save more

DOWNSIZING to a more fuel and tax efficient car should be just part of your master plan to cut the motoring budget.

The next stage involves smarter driving and journey planning and getting fitter by walking and cycling instead of using the car on short journeys – cold engines waste fuel and produce 60 per cent more emissions than warm ones.

Short car journeys also mean extra servicing and more engine wear.

SMALL SAVERS: Downsizing to modern cars like the latest generation Mazda3 or newly revised Renault Clio (right) can save money, but applying just a few driving tips will knock more pounds off your motoring bill

BY **STEVE LOADER**

If you must drive then follow these tips from the Institute of Advanced Motorists and RAC Foundation:

• Plan your route to save strain on car and driver. Take the most direct route – a sat nav can help – and go off peak if possible. Commuters should think about car sharing, Park and Ride bus schemes or other public transport.

• Have your vehicle serviced regularly. Neglected engines waste at least ten per cent more fuel and catalytic converters only clean emissions when properly maintained.

• Check tyres – under-inflated tyres need replacing more often (itself an environmental problem), are dangerous and waste fuel. Check pressures weekly.

• Obey speed limits to save money and stay legal. Feather the throttle as you reach cruising speed; 56mph uses 25 per cent less fuel than 70mph and a smoother driving style saves fuel.

• Accelerate briskly without racing the engine – pulling away too fast uses up to 60 per cent more fuel. Intelligent gear changes at modest engine speeds can save up to 15 per cent in fuel.

• Reduce drag – remove roof racks and carriers when not in use and keep windows closed to avoid drag and wasted fuel. Remove unnecessary and heavy boot luggage and wide wheels and tyres that add rolling resistance. Air conditioning costs fuel too so try to use the fan and vents unassisted.

• Buy green fuel and use less. Look for low sulphur 'city' diesel or cleaner petrol (low sulphur/aromatics). Consider converting to LPG (liquid petroleum gas) – half the price of petrol and cleaner.

• Think ahead – there is no point rushing and then having to brake suddenly.

• Be a tank miser. Why fill the tank to the brim and burn more fuel carrying more weight than necessary?

• Stuck in traffic? Turn off the engine after two minutes to save fuel and emissions.

• For more eco driving tips see Julie Maddocks' online video report at: http://www.yourkenttv-.co.uk/community.

Essential guide to where you can save

- KOS is offering Personalised Weekender Bags for just £29.99
- Maidstone Kia Motor Dealer in Maidstone is offering a free set of maps with any new car purchased before the end of September
- Robins and Day Canterbury Motor Dealer in Canterbury is offering MOTs for £29.99, and service and MOT from £119.99
- Baileys Nissan Motor Dealer in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off MOTs
- Caffyns Vauxhall Motor Dealer in Tunbridge Wells is offering half-price MOT with a service
- Old Sawmills furniture store in Ashford is offering 20 per cent off all showroom items
- Chart Hills Golf Club in Biddenden is offering 10 per cent discount on all room hire
- Village Hotelin Maidstone is offering free loaded nachos worth £5.95 when you buy a bucket of six Mexican Sol beers from the Victory pub
- Furniture Island in Folkestone is offering an extra 10 per cent off all sofas with this voucher
- Linwood Electronicsin Rainham is offering £100 off a Panasonic G10series Plasma when you trade in your old TV
- Northgate Alfa Motor Dealer in Canterbury is offering air conditioning service for just £79.95+vat

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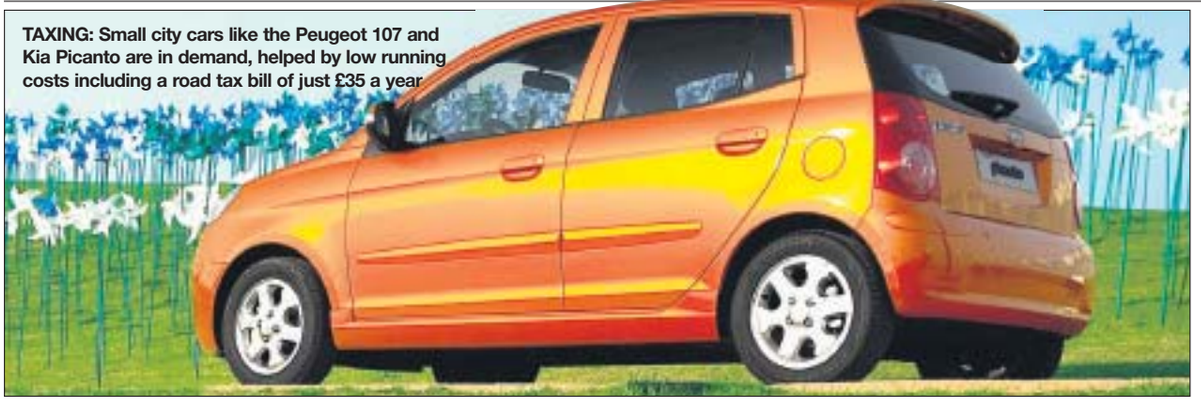
CHEVROLET

Official Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): Vauxhall Range: urban 12.7 (22.3) - 51.4 (5.5), extra-urban 25.4 (11.1) - 74.3 (3.8), combined 18.6 (15.2) - 62.8 (4.5), CO2 Emissions 119 - 364 g/km. Official Fuel Consumption Figures mpg (litres/100km): Chevrolet 0.8 S: urban 6.9 (40.9), extra-urban 4.2 (67.3), combined 5.2 (54.3), CO2 Emissions 119 g/km. *Terms and conditions apply. Vehicles are shown for illustration purposes only. These offers supersede all previously advertised offers. Prices correct at time of going to press. Offers are subject to availability. Licenced credit brokers, written details available on request, finance is subject to status. E&OE. 38482



TAXING: Small city cars like the Peugeot 107 and Kia Picanto are in demand, helped by low running costs including a road tax bill of just £35 a year

Duty calls for more savings

BY **STEVE LOADER**

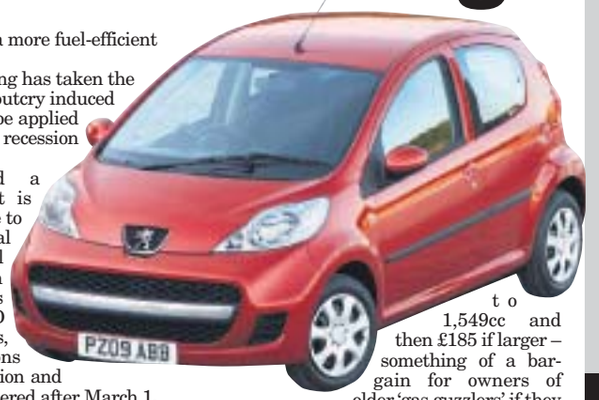
WHATEVER you do, don't swap your current car just to save a few pounds on road tax.

On the other hand, Government efforts to tax 'gas guzzlers' off the road can further ease the burden on your motoring budget if you plan to downsize or go for a more fuel-efficient model.

Chancellor Alistair Darling has taken the pressure off a bit after an outcry induced by draconian rates due to be applied to larger cars, just as the recession clobbered the economy.

But Labour – and a Conservative government is unlikely to be different due to the world's environmental worries – has said it will continue to drive down vehicle sizes and emissions by using tough VED (Vehicle Excise Duty) rates, based on CO2 emissions rather than fuel consumption and applying only to cars registered after March 1, 2001.

Inconsistent emissions data on older cars means these are taxed simply at £120/year up to 1,549cc and then £185 if larger – something of a bargain for owners of older 'gas guzzlers' if they can bear higher fuel bills, opt for a £1,500-2,000 LPG (liquid petroleum gas) conversion or cover relatively few miles.



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Band A (0-100g/km of CO2) – £0
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Band F (141-150g/km) – £125
Band G (151-160g/km) – £150
Bands H and I (161-180g/km) – £175
Bands J and K (181-225g/km) – £215
Band L (226-255g/km) – £405
Band M (255g/km plus) – £405

Essential guide to where you can save

- Northgate Alfa Motor Dealer in Canterbury is offering fixed-price servicing for cars three years plus. Gold Care Petrol or Diesel, £169
- KOS is offering a Pulsar Kinetic Watch fpor only £49.99 (inc p&p) no battery required, saving over 50 per cent on RRP
- Baileys Nissan Motor Dealer in Canterbury is offering 15 per cent off all servicing
- Homewood Orchard Garden Centre in Maidstone is offering 10 per cent off its garden furniture range
- Bones on Beds in Herne Bay is offering 10 per cent off mattresses
- Living Out log cabins store in Chestfield, Maidstone, is offering free installation on all standard range of log cabins
- Motoline Renault Motor Dealer in Canterbury, Ashford and Maidstone is offering £99 service and free MOT for vehicles three years and older
- Bradgate Park Luxury Holiday Homes in Margate is offering free Sunday lunch for two when you view the holiday homes
- Secure Style, windows doors and conservatories in Herne Bay is offering 30 per cent off fascias
- KOS is offering Sun Blaster Glare Shields from £14.99

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The official fuel consumption figures in mpg (l/100km) for the Mazda range: Urban 18.0 (15.7) – 55.4 (5.1), Extra Urban 31.0 (9.1) – 80.7 (3.5), Combined 24.6 (11.5) – 68.9 (4.3). CO2 emissions (g/km) 107 – 299.

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The same old Tories …

That Kent's newly elected Conservative county councillors' very first act was to award themselves an eight per cent pay rise is utterly disgraceful.

They recently awarded KCC staff, including hard-working teachers and care workers, just one per cent, yet feel themselves deserving of eight times that amount. I am sure all those who voted for Conservative candidates in June elections had no idea that they were planning such an outrageous abuse.

Cllr Alex Perkins (Lib Dem), Canterbury City Council

Let's break the cycle

May I draw attention to another drain gulley, this time in Carlton Road, Ashford, which may not be particularly important but is a sign of the times none the less.

Furthermore, there is a lot of loose debris, which includes large stones. This road is in a dangerous state to any vehicle, particularly bicycles, and demands urgent attention.

This is typical of many of our rural roads, which never used to be in this state.

It's all down to a lack of maintenance. Allowing vegetation to thrive allows it to take root and break up road surfaces.

I have cycled through the Black Forest and Harz Mountains in Germany, which are much safer than our rural roads (and tourist friendly). Most of our bridle paths are not good enough to cycle on.

I have been accused of sitting on the outside and my criticisms are not always welcome. I have no wish to be part of a comfortable club – which may produce fancy maps, glossy literature, and indulge in meetings and discussions – if it isn't prepared to criticise where necessary.

We need to improve our cycling infrastructure. We shouldn't be persuading children to cycle, if so many of our adults are not prepared to do so themselves, because they see the cycling environment as threatening – a threat not confined solely to traffic.

My interest is, and has been for years, to see many more people of all abilities cycling. We need to create a better environment and we need to change our culture.

Ted Prangnell, Kennington

Save our railway heritage

I fully agree with the long-awaited redevelopment of Folkestone, which should make it a great place for residents and tourists alike – as it used to be.

But this seems to have ground to halt and the harbour area looks a shadow of its former self, with no amusements or facilities.

I have a suggestion about the harbour station: could it be returned to its boat-train glory days, with the track section left in the station, and the signal box?

The offices and old waiting room on the car park side could be made into an ice-cream parlour/tearoom.

The other platform could be used as small offices (the former Orient Express offices), which were refurbished a few years ago.

It could all be part of a railway history showpiece in the development, with a plaque to commemorate that the station was the embarkation point for millions of soldiers in both world wars. The horrible modern concrete footbridge could be blocked off, or removed, to stop vandalism.

The station could be repaired for not too much more than the cost of flattening the area for good. Most of the infrastructure remains and has done for over a century.

It could make the development a great blend of old and new. It would also make use of a splendid part of our railway heritage which is about to be lost for ever.

Railtrack has now officially closed the line and we would like people to sign the online petition to halt demolition of the remaining station, viaduct and track. To help keep this piece of Folkestone's heritage, go to http://petitions.number10.gov.uk/folkestone/#detail.

Stevan Kinghorn, Birchington

Punch, Judy and Steve

As usual, like so many MPs, Steve Ladyman insults our intelligence with the typical Punch and Judy politics we've come to expect from politicians unable to deal with truth and reality and only concerned with their own survival (Opinion, KoS, last week)

He conveniently forgets that John Prescott had a plan to cover the South East with hundreds of thousands of homes, with no regard for infrastructure, as to whether there were enough hospitals, schools, doctors, jobs, water, waste disposal or power, or even whether they were constructed on flood plains.

He also conveniently forgets that much of this housing is only necessary because of his Government's open door policy on immigration. By their own admission there are some 500,000 illegal immigrants about which nothing is known. Obviously the Government is so desperate for voters it needs to import them and hope they will vote for them in gratitude. Our MPs continue to take us all for a bunch of mugs, to be manipulated to suit their own ends.

Phil Granger, West Malling

What a load of scrap

Once upon a time the Government had a vast scrapyard in the middle of a deserted industrial estate. A civil servant said: "Someone may steal from it at night." So they created a night watchman position and hired a person for the job. Then the Prime Minister said: "How does the watchman do his job without instruction?"

So they created a planning department and hired two people, one to write the instructions, and one to do time studies.

Then the Minister for the Department of Work and Pensions said: "How will we know the night watchman is doing the tasks correctly?"

So they created a quality control department and hired two people. One to do the studies and one to write the reports.

Then the Chancellor said: "How are these people going to get paid?"

So they created the positions of time-keeper and payroll officer, then hired two people.

Then the Treasury said: "Who will be accountable for all these people?"

So they created an admin section and hired an administrative officer, assistant administrative officer, and a legal secretary.

Then the Chief Secretary to the Treasury said: "We have had this command in operation for a year and are £18,000 over budget. we must cut back overall costs."

So they laid off the night watchman.

Anthony Sansum, by email

Letters continued on page 56

YOUR LETTERS

KOS Media welcomes your comments and letters for publication. Please send correspondence to: Letters to the Editor, KOS Media, Apple Barn, Smeeth, Ashford, Kent TN25 6SR. Alternatively fax them to: 01303 817002, or email them to editorial@kosmedia.co.uk. Please include your name and address, although these will be withheld in exceptional circumstances. Please also include a daytime telephone number for verification (this will not be published). We reserve the right to edit letters.

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BIRTHS

BASS
Connor George Bass born on 23rd June 2009, weighing 6lb 9oz. Son to Jonathan and Joanna Bass, and little brother to Jack Bass, of Maidstone.

BROWN
Steve and Michelle Brown are pleased to announce the birth of their daughter Willow May on the 18th June 2009 weighing 7lbs.

FAGG
Paul and Amy of Aylesham proudly announce the birth of their twin sons, Ethan James and Ben William. They were born on 1st June 2009.

GAMBRELL
Samantha and Adam Gambrell are pleased to announce the safe arrival of Chloe Louise born on 18th June 2009 weighing 7lbs 1oz.

GOUGH
Hollie-Grace born on 9th June 2009 weighing 7lb 11oz. Daughter to Nikki Gough and sister to Jasmin and Callum Gough.

GOULDING
Ian and Christine of Tunbridge Wells are pleased to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter Rose Marian on 6th June 2009 weighing 7lb 15oz. A sister for Kian.

ISAACS
Alex born on the 20th June 2009, weighing 8lbs 10oz. Son to Lindsey and Michael Isaacs in Ramsgate.

LE GRANGE
Paul and Anna of Faversham are delighted to announce the birth of their beautiful son, Elijah John Le Grange on 6th June 2009 at 7.15pm weighing 9lb 1oz. A new brother for Noah.

MACKENZIE
Emma and Jack celebrate the birth of their son Brendan Craig on 20th June 2009 in Margate. You are the miracle who we will love and treasure forever.

MAYALL
Jamie and Kathryn of Canterbury are delighted to announce the birth of their beautiful daughter, Lilly-Rose Mayall, on 20th June 2009. Lilly-Rose was born at 10.05 pm weighing 7lb 4oz.

MAYNARD-BALDOCK
Michael Baldock and Emma Maynard are celebrating the birth of their beautiful daughter Millie Georgina Jane. Born on 4th June 2009 at The William Harvey Hospital. A little sister for Kaila-Marie.

MURPHY
Vicky and Marc are very proud to announce the early arrival of their beautiful daughter Rae Marie Murphy born on 15th June 2009 weighing 7lb at Darent Valley Hospital Dartford

QUINNEY
Paul and Juliana are extremely proud to announce the birth of their baby daughter Natalya Melissa on 18th June 2009. This has brought much happiness and joy to them and the family.

SIMMONDS
A big welcome to our beautiful daughter Gracie Simmonds born on 23/06/2009, love Mummy and Daddy.

SQUIRES
Welcome to the world to our beautiful daughter Scarlet-Rose Cleopatra Squires. Born on May 25th 2009 at 11.10am. Weight 6lb 13½oz. You've Daddys eyes and Mummys ears, we love you so much already. Love Mummy and Daddy.

TINGLEY-WELLER
Paul Weller and Katy Tingley are pleased to announce the arrival of Nancy Rose on 19th June 2009, weighing 6lb 3oz. A new sister for Amy, Lilly and Brooke.

WESTALL
Kate and Danny would like to annouce the birth of their son William Daniel Westall on 16th June 2009, weighing 8lb 3oz.

WILFORD
Matthew Wilford and Katie Fish celebrate the birth of their son Thomas Michael Wilford born on 26th June 2009, weighing 7lb 1.5oz.

WILLIAMS
Anna and Lyndon Williams of Margate celebrate the birth of their daughter Sophia Christine Williams on 15th June 2009. Mummy and Daddys special little angel

DEATHS

BANKS
Monty Banks, Motorcyclist of Capel, passed away peacefully after a long illness on the 23rd June 2009, aged 87 years.

BONSOR
Eileen died peacefully in her sleep after a long illness on 19th June 2009. Much loved mother of Michael and Nana to Sam and Ruth. Any enquiries to Lyons Funeral Directors of Canterbury.

DEEN
Peter Francis passed away on 24th June 2009 at The Pilgrims Hospice, Canterbury. Beloved father to Gary, grandfather to Kelly, great-grandfather to Harvey and best friend to Liz. All enquiries to A Welch and Sons, Canterbury 01227 787801.

JOHNSON
Herbert Edward Johnson on 19th June 2009 aged 95. Dearly loved father of Josephine and Janet, grandfather to Karla, Alex, Katharine and Margaret and great grandfather to Olivia and Joshua. Funeral service at Medway Crematorium at 12noon on 7th July 2009.

MOON
Marie Moon died peacefully on the 26th June 2009 at the Lions Hospice. Funeral on 14th July 2009, 10 am at St Anselms Church Dartford - cremation at Eltham Crematorium - no flowers - donations to Cancer Research. Undertakers Levertons at Dartford.

RYAN
Emily Ann Ryan of Gravesend passed away peacefully on 27th June 2009 aged 88 years. A much loved mum and nan who will be sadly missed by family and friends. Please contact Lewis Solomon of Gravesend for further details

WELLS
Frederick James Wells (Jim) died peacefully on 27th June 2009, loving dad to Daphne, Roy and Terry and grandchildren, Great Grandchildren and Great Great Grandchildren. Will sadly be missed.

WESSON
Irene passed away peacefully on 14th June 2009 aged 83 years. Dearly loved mother of Janet and Valerie, grandmother of Debbie, Scott, Nicola and Michael, and great-grandmother to Luke. Will be sadly missed by all who loved her.

Letters continued from page 55

The dangers of meat

Recent results from the largest study to investigate dietary habits and cancer once again show that vegetarians are significantly less likely to develop cancer than meat eaters.

The difference was most striking in cancers of the blood, such as leukaemia and multiple myeloma, which vegetarians were 45 per cent less likely to develop.

And it is not just cancer that vegetarianism can help prevent. Previous research has linked eating meat to an increased risk of obesity, diabetes, heart disease and stroke.

Anyone looking to improve their health can contact Animal Aid on 01732 364546 or at info@animalaid.co.uk for a free Go Veggie guide full of recipes and nutritional tips to help you make the switch to a meat-free diet.

Ashley Owen, Animal Aid, Tonbridge

Keeping Rover cool

This week the Met Office issued a heatwave warning and if you are feeling hot, you can be sure your dog is also feeling the heat.

Humans are much more efficient at keeping cool than dogs. Dogs do not sweat, they pant, and the more they pant to keep cool the more energy they exert – creating a vicious circle. Dogs Trust, the UK's largest dog welfare charity, has essential tips for keeping your canine companion cool and happy as the mercury rises:

- Keep your dog in the shade or indoors at the height of the day. Walk them early in the morning or late at night.
- Cover any pale skin on your dog's ears, nose or belly with a strong dog sun-block, available from pet shops. Human sun lotion can be toxic to dogs.
- Keep a water bottle and drinking bowl with you at all times. Dogs dehydrate very easily.
- Never leave dogs in hot cars, even when it is overcast and even with the windows down. Just 20 minutes can prove fatal.

Summer is a wonderful opportunity to spend time outdoors with your pets, but please do so safely. If your dog shows any signs of distress, contact a vet immediately.

Chris Laurence, Dogs Trust

Making a clean break

What do you look for in a summer holiday? How about spending your break cleaning spires, vacuuming stained glass windows, getting stuck in to cemetery conservation or helping with the maintenance of a cathedral?

As a volunteer, CSV Cathedral Camps – run by Community Service Volunteers – is one of the projects I'm involved with where volunteers can make a difference to Britain's heritage. Throughout July and August, I'm looking to recruit other young people to take part in Cathedral Camps, where volunteers get the chance to sleep on-site in some of the prettiest and most unusual locations.

This year we have 20 camps throughout the country and it's a great way to meet other young people as well as make an impact in protecting our architectural heritage. Visit ww.cathedralcamps.org.uk for more information.

Robert Hooper, volunteer leader, Cathedral Camps

Best value pub meals

The Good Pub Guide is launching its annual national search to find the best value in pub meals. Which pub will win the title of bargain pub of the year?

We are calling on your help. Please name your favourite bargain pub by writing in, or log on at www.thegoodpubguide.co.uk. We're looking for anything which gives really great value. Here are some for instances: tasty two-course lunches at rock-bottom prices, two-for-one early bird suppers, super value steaks or pies with a free pint or glass of wine thrown in, pensioner specials (sometimes even student specials) or pocket-friendly themed nights out.

Please help us spread the good news: the more people who hear about local pub bargains, the more customers will turn up, and this in turn helps to keep the prices down.

Fiona Stapley, editor, Good Pub Guide

Praised to the skies

Dogfights in the summer skies above my father's Thanet farm with Spitfires and Hurricanes pitted against the might of the Luftwaffe are some of my earliest memories.

Watching those World War Two aerial duels was wonderfully exciting for me as a small boy, far too young to understand that the fate of civilisation was being decided overhead.

If we hadn't won the Battle of Britain there would have been no D-Day, which made eventual victory possible.

Churchill's immortal words: "Never in the field of human conflict was so much owed by so many to so few", captured that defining moment so well.

Shortly we in the frontline county will again be remembering that epic struggle as we commemorate the 69th anniversary. I am privileged to be among those honouring some of the last of the Few at the Battle of Britain Memorial Trust veterans' dinner in Ashford on Saturday, July 11, and at the memorial day parade and service at Capel-le-Ferne the following day.

Incredibly, the Battle of Britain took place a little over 30 years after the first manned flights. Our county has witnessed many firsts in the comparatively short history of aviation. Over the weekend of July 25-26, Dover and the Duke of York's Royal Military School will be celebrating the centenary of Louis Bleriot's historic cross-Channel flight in 1909. And in May, the Isle of Sheppey's claim to fame as birthplace of our aviation and the first flight in Britain was marked by celebrations and the unveiling of a commemorative stone by Group Captain Patrick Tootal, one of my deputy lieutenants, and the decorated Battle of Britain fighter pilot Bob Foster.

The island's aviation heritage is the stuff of legend. It was a magnet for the founding fathers of aviation, including Wilbur and Orville Wright from the United States, and the Short Brothers. And it saw the birth of naval flying, encouraged by Churchill, who himself flew at Eastchurch and described it as "a novel and thrilling experience".

Early fighters flew from Kentish airfields to combat the zeppelins and the Gotha bombers in World War One, and between the wars Shorts built their famous flying boats on the Medway.

Kent's World War Two airfields are a Battle of Britain roll of honour in themselves: Biggin Hill, Detling, Eastchurch, Gravesend, Hawkinge, Lympne, Manston, Rochester and West Malling.

And it was from Manston in 1942 that heroic Fleet Air Arm crews flew their slow and flimsy Swordfish biplanes to launch torpedoes against three powerful German warships, Scharnhorst, Gneisenau and Prinz Eugen. None of the aircraft and only five of our 18 airmen survived.

Some of these famous airfields are still operational, although thankfully nowadays for civil aviation, continuing the remarkable story of Kent's flying heritage.

So this month, as we salute the brave young men who held the line in Kentish skies in the dark days of two world wars, let us also remember the achievements of the great pioneers who gave our county pride of place in the annals of British flight.

Allan Willett, Lord Lieutenant of Kent

Skewed voting system

The system used to count the votes in the recent county elections has led to an unbalanced council, with the Conservatives controlling 74 of the 84 seats, having won less than half the votes.

Under such a system, there is a real risk councillors become out of touch with the people they represent. We have seen the effect of too many safe seats at Westminster in the form of unscrupulous MPs making inappropriate claims on their expenses.

However, I was shocked by how quickly the new Conservative council lost touch with the people of Kent. This week, 64 councillors voted themselves an eight per cent increase in personal allowances.

To put this into context, staff at KCC were offered a one per cent increase in salary this year and many more people are struggling to cope on reduced incomes, especially pensioners and those who have lost their jobs in the recession. It is outrageous for politicians to vote to line their own pockets so soon after an election. Is this the new Tory Party David Cameron is promising?

Guy Voizey, Parliamentary spokesman Canterbury and Whitstable Lib Dems

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Grand start to next step for scholars

OPPORTUNITY: Kent students are being offered a £1,000 postgraduate scholarship

By **STEVE KNIGHT**
steve.knight@kosmedia.co.uk

STUDENTS at the University of Kent have been offered £1,000 incentives to stay on as postgraduates.

To celebrate the launch of the university's new Graduate School, a fund has been set up that will see those accepted on postgraduate courses for 2009-10 receive one-year scholarships. The cash is available to students considering both full and part-time courses in all subjects. Professor Diane Houston, pictured right, Dean of the Graduate School, said the scholarship would give postgraduates a great start to their new studies. She added: "This is a fantastic opportunity for any of our graduates considering postgraduate study at Kent. The launch of the Graduate School signals a particularly exciting time and whether they are studying at Canterbury, Medway, Brussels or Paris, our postgraduates benefit from teaching and supervision by world-leading researchers and have access to excellent facilities and training opportunities."

According to the University of Kent, the mission of the Graduate School is to "lead and champion the strategic development of provision for graduate education and research".

It aims to achieve this through new high-quality postgraduate facilities and programmes, including student-led initiatives such as social events, conferences and workshops. The Graduate School, which has a close relationship with the new postgraduate Woolf College, also opens up new funding opportunities by forging links with research councils, other graduate schools and national and international organisations.

The £1,000 scholarship, which will be halved for part-timers, will be awarded to all students registered for a postgraduate course at the university by January 4 next year.

Candidates must hold a Bachelors degree with honours or an undergraduate Masters degree awarded by the university in 2009.

The offer is not available to students who have been awarded foundation degrees, HNCs, HNDs or other postgraduate degrees.

For more information and to download a postgraduate application form visit www.kent.ac.uk/graduateschool.

THE benefits mental health patients can receive from singing and art were highlighted at a public seminar organised by Canterbury Christ Church University.

The event, at the Sidney De Haan Research Centre for Arts and Health, in Folkestone, featured a performance from the Mustard Seed Singers, a choir made up of such patients, NHS staff, carers and others.

Artist Sandra Pearson was also on hand to talk about the Mind the Gap arts festival she created, and the positive effect it had on participants.

Ms Pearson said: "The seminar discussed the setting-up of an arts festival celebrating creativity in mental health.

"Attendees gained insights into how an independent initiative created a unique event in nine months and the positive effect it has had on people."

Don't bury your head in the sand!!

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Breastfeeding with buddies

BREASTFEEDING benefits are being promoted to mums in Gravesend as part of a project aimed at easing women into higher education.

Mothers on the Breast Buddies course at the School of Health and Social Care will also learn about the anatomy and physiology of lactation, the health benefits and how to solve problems when breastfeeding is not going well.

The women are guided through their studies by midwife Karen Younes, a student at the University of Greenwich.

She said: "Breast Buddies empowers mothers to pass on their skills to others. It's not about a teacher telling them what to do. It's a shared experience."

Workshop is the business

MORE than 50 local businesses were represented at a one-day workshop dedicated to solving growth and performance problems.

The event, was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council, was held at the University of Kent at Canterbury's Kent Business School.

It was part of an ongoing project entitled Promoting Sustainable Performance that is being carried out by the school's Centre for Employment, Competitiveness and Growth.

Director Dr Mark Gilman said: "Ongoing engagement between businesses and the UK's higher education sector is of paramount importance in order that relevant knowledge is transferred and fostered for superior performance, especially in these tough economic times."

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Regardless of the recession, a new European Directive now legally requires an estimated 2.5 million homes and commercial properties being rented, sold or built to have an Energy Assessment this year alone. And more 'green environmental' laws are coming!

For example next year nearly every commercial property with air-conditioning must have an Assessment before the January 2011 deadline.

Applicants are therefore required to train now as multi-skilled 'Property Professionals' to carry out commercial and air-conditioning Energy Assessments and **many other roles** such as Flood and Fire Risk Assessments, Energy Audits, Insulation Surveys, Property Valuations, Home Condition Reports, Public Buildings Assessments etc.

No previous experience is necessary, training to join this new growth industry can usually be taken around current job at our nationwide training centres **approved by the Government-appointed Awarding Body for the Built Environment and is subsidised.** On qualifying start your own energy business, work for other Assessment Providers or be available for potential full or part-time work through our Energy Assessor Panel **with earnings of £50 to £1,200 per Assessment.**

ref: HK0260

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Salary: £18,250 pro-rata

Hours: Full-time 37 hours per week / Part-time 10 hours per week – to include evening and occasional weekend working to suit the needs of the service

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For further information and an information pack, please contact Sandie Hornby our Chief Operations Officer on 01795 583440 or sandie.hornby@swalecarers.org.uk

Completed application forms to be received not later than 10am 10th July, interviews will be held 17th July at Swale Carers Centre.

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Should you wish to discuss this role informally, please contact Smita Derodra or Karl Grice on 01795 590212.

Application forms and job descriptions can be downloaded from www.kca.org.uk
Alternatively, email recruitment@kca.org.uk or call 01795 590635.
Please quote reference number: 581 (permanent) or 582 (maternity cover).

Closing date: Friday 17 July 2009
Interview date: Thursday 30 July 2009

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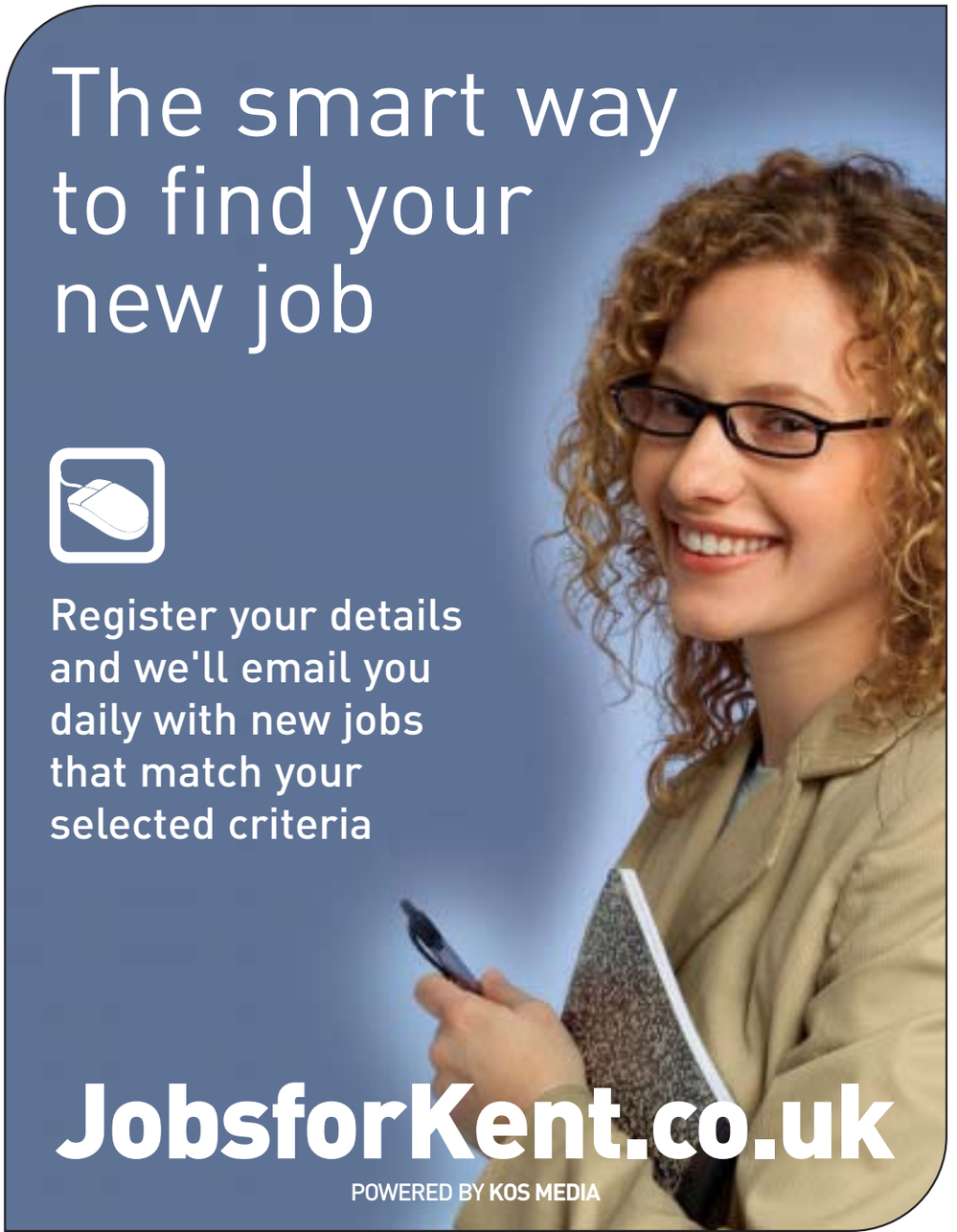

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We are determined to provide the very highest levels of support to students with specific learning difficulties. Our excellent track record speaks for itself - and now we are taking it further. Our goal is to improve inclusion and deliver best practice as we raise the aspirations and achievements of every learner.

If you share our ambitions, this exciting role could be perfect for you. As well as assessing and supporting students across all curriculum areas, you will establish student support plans and contribute to diagnostic screening for Dyslexia.

With a recognised SpLD teaching qualification, you should bring proven experience of working with learners who have specific learning difficulties including Dyslexia, Aspergers, Dyspraxia and Speech and Language Disorder. **Ref: KOS03**

In return, there is an excellent range of benefits including generous annual leave, final salary pension, flexible working options, private health plan, on-site nursery and more.

To find out more, view our full list of opportunities and apply online, visit www.wkc.ac.uk Alternatively call 01732 376511 or email hr-dept@wkc.ac.uk

Closing date: Thursday 16th July 2009

MASTERCLASS ACADEMIC SUPPORT

QUALIFIED TEACHERS

REQUIRED
Secondary/Primary/SEN/FE
Permanent/Long Term and Daily
Assignments available now and for
September onwards
Excellent Rates of Pay
Dedicated Qualified Consultants

Call Free phone 0800 917 5643
or email CV to
teachers@masterclass-academic.co.uk

Teachers wanted

Local Teachers for Local Schools

We have 100's of permanent positions throughout Kent for qualified teachers, teaching assistants and school support staff.

Email paul.chuter@timeplan.net or call 01732 373340

Quality Mark
department for children, schools and families

timeplan

Find teaching jobs online

Register your details and we'll email you daily with new jobs that match your selected criteria

JobsforKent.co.uk

The smart way to find a job in the County

POWERED BY KOS MEDIA

PART-TIME RECEPTIONIST ADMIN SUPPORT

Riverside Primary School
St Edmund's Way, Rainham, Kent

Salary £12,629-£13,703 pa, pro rata FTE
15hrs/week 8.45am to 11.45am Mon-Fri
Term time only

Initially from 1st September 2009, 3 month temporary contract to be reviewed depending on opening date of new children's centre.

Any offers of appointment are subject to an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. This school is committed to recruiting with care and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Contact **Mrs Smith, Office Manager** tel **01634 338700** or email **office@riverside.medway.sch.uk** for an application form and job specification.

CVs will not be accepted.

Applications close: 10 July 2009
Interviews on: 20 July 2009

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T: 01227 710392 | W: www.spiresacademy.com

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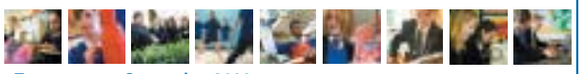
Spires ACADEMY



To commence September 2009:

Learning Support Assistants in AEN & Science

£14,169 - £16,064 pro rata 37 hours per week
8.30 – 4.30 Mon – Thurs 8.30 – 4.00 Fri term time + inset

We are seeking to appoint two Learning Support Assistants; one to join our successful Support & Guidance Team, to work with students who have a wide range of additional educational needs, and one to support students with Science.

Energetic and a champion of children, you will have an interest in science and experience of working with students with additional educational needs. The ability to work well under pressure is essential as are excellent organisational, interpersonal and communication skills.

Further details and application forms are available on our website www.spiresacademy.com Alternatively, contact Marion Wigington on 01227 710392 or email on m.wigington@spiresacademy.com to request an application pack.

Closing date: noon, Wednesday 8th July 2009.
Interview date: Wednesday 15th July 2009.

Spires Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to appropriate child protection screening including checks with previous employers and the Criminal Records Bureau.

To advertise in this section

01303 817040

MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint an outstanding individual in the following area:

Management Information Services Data Administrator Ref: P0652

Salary: £10,181 - £17,750 per annum

We are looking for an individual to collect and enter data efficiently and assist with the running of the Management Information Services department. The successful candidate will have data entry and administrative experience. In addition, knowledge of current legislation regarding Data Protection and Equality and Diversity would be beneficial.

Closing date: Friday 17 July 2009

MidKent College and RBLI Employment Solutions are working in partnership to support disabled applicants. For assistance please contact RBLI on 0800783114 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk

For an application pack and further details visit www.midkent.ac.uk or e mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk alternatively you may contact Human Resources on 01634 884402.

The College is committed to safeguarding children and young people therefore any offer of employment will be subject to a CRB check.

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer

Action for Business College | Investors in Diversity | Positive About Disabled People | RBLI | Investor in People

CARETAKER

Riverside Primary School
St Edmund's Way
Rainham Kent

Salary £14,891-£18,937 pa
37 hrs per week, split shift, plus o/time

Required as soon as possible.

Duties include general maintenance of the buildings and grounds (including DIY), security, portering and some heavy work.

Applicants need to be aware that proposed building work and changes to the school site are likely to result in an extension of duties in the future.

Any offers of appointment are subject to an Enhanced Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) check. This school is committed to recruiting with care and safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment.

Contact **Mrs Smith, Office Manager**, tel **01634 338700** or email **office@riverside.medway.sch.uk** for an application form and job specification.

CVs will not be accepted.

Applications Close: 10 July 2009
Interviews on: 17 July 2009

Ursuline College

225 Canterbury Road
Westgate-on-Sea
Kent CT8 8LX
Phone 01843 834431 Fax 01843 835365

Specialist Sports College

Roman Catholic Co-educational Voluntary Aided Comprehensive 780 on roll

Required September 2009

Laboratory Technician

37 hours per week, Term Time only (38 weeks per year) Kent Scheme 3, Points 7-11 (£13,959—£15,826 pro-rata)

The successful candidate will join a hardworking, friendly Science team working within the College. Previous school experience would be an advantage, although not necessary as full training will be provided. We are looking for someone who can be flexible and adaptable in their approach to work, can work using their own initiative and who enjoys working as part of a team.

The Ursuline College Science laboratories are situated in a purpose built building, are fully equipped with excellent storage facilities, with the added benefit of a spacious technician work room.

Please apply for an application pack via email to: info1@ursuline.kent.sch.uk or in writing at the above address to Mrs Tanya Utton, Headteacher.

Closing date: Thursday 9th July 2009
Interviews to be held Tuesday 14th July 2009

Ursuline College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff/volunteers to share this commitment. This post is subject to a CRB enhanced disclosure check.

To advertise in this section
01303 817040

MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint an outstanding individual in the following area:

HR Adviser

Salary - £29,559-£36,630

MidKent College has been providing 'top quality' education and training in Kent for almost 100 years. As one of Kent's largest further and higher education Colleges it is important that we also provide 'top quality' support for our managers and staff in this innovative and exciting environment.

We are expanding our HR team to include professional, CIPD qualified HR Advisers, who will strengthen our provision of advice and guidance for managers and staff. We are looking to appoint experienced professionals who can support organisational change processes and have good knowledge of employment law, combined with strong generalist experience and knowledge in key areas of HR delivery. This will include employee relations, performance management, recruitment, workforce planning and organisational development.

Our strong customer service focus requires excellent interpersonal skills and an ability to engage with people at all levels of the organisation, working to drive, develop and implement new HR policies and initiatives that support the delivery of 'top quality' education and training.

For an application pack please contact Caroline Stark on 01634 884511 or e mail caroline.stark@midkent.ac.uk

Closing date: Mid-day July 15th 2009

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer

Action for Business College | Investors in Diversity | Positive About Disabled People | RBLI | Investor in People

MidKent College

Earn while you learn!

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding apprentices in the following areas:

Customer Service | **Administration**
Plumbing | **Carpentry/Joinery**
Hairdressing | **Painting and Decorating**

Training allowance: £6,171

Successful candidates will work towards the apprentice framework including a relevant NVQ Level within their chosen subject. We are looking for enthusiastic individuals who will benefit from learning whilst working in a stimulating environment. All apprentice roles are to start 1 September 2009. Interviews are scheduled to take place the week beginning 20 July 2009.

Closing date: 20 July 2009

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

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FOXWOOD SCHOOL

SEABROOK ROAD
HYTHE KENT CT21 5QJ
Tel: 01303 261155

School Cook Vacancy

We are looking for someone that wants to make a difference in planning personalised meals for children with learning difficulties. You must be able to plan your time efficiently in order to meet service times and agreed food quality standards including menu planning, ordering, stock control, budget planning and general paperwork.

27.50 hours per week, term time only (8 am – 1:30pm Monday to Friday) £8.35–£8.70 per hour Kent Scheme 4, to start in September 09

Health & Safety & Health Hygiene certificate essential.

Please apply including an up to date copy of your CV and contact details to:
The School Administrator – Sue.Kewer@foxwood.kent.sch.uk

Closing date for applications **Friday 3rd July 2009.**

TERM TIME TEACHERS

EXPERIENCED TEACHERS & NQT's URGENTLY REQUIRED

Are you an experienced Teacher, NQT or TA looking for local work to suit you?

Do you want FREE INSET & CPD advice?

We offer everything from 1/2 day supply to full time permanent.

WE offer positions in Nursery KS1, 2 & Secondary as well as AEN.

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Tel No: **01892 676076**
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e-mail: **office@termtimeteachers.co.uk**

To advertise in this section **01303 817040**

Career Opportunities

Canterbury College

Canterbury College is an equal opportunities employer

Lecturer Public Services — ***08/145***
37 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 per annum

Lecturer Public Services — ***09/36***
37 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 per annum

Lecturer Performing Arts -Drama and Musical Theatre — ***09/37***
18.5 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

Lecturer Chemistry — ***06/182***
18.5 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

Lecturer Plumbing and Gas Fitting — ***09/39***
37 hours per week, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 per annum

Higher Education Supply Lecturers are required in the following areas:

Electrical/Electronic Engineering
Building Surveying - AutoCAD — ***S/HE***
Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

Supply Lecturer Nail Technology — ***S/NT***
Various hours available, salary range £18,387 – £26,363 pro rata per annum

Learning Support Independent Living and Leisure Skills — ***09/34***
30 hours per week, 38 weeks term time.
Salary starting at £16,914 pro rata per annum. One Year Fixed Term Post

Trainer Demonstrator Theatre Costume and Props Construction — ***09/40***
18.5 hours per week, salary starting at £18,963 pro rata per annum

Business Development Administrative Assistant — ***07/49***
37 hours per week, salary starting from £15,085 per annum

Supply NVQ Assessors required in the following areas:
Early Years — ***S/NVQ/EY***
Play work — ***S/NVQ/PW***
Nail Technology — ***S/NVQ/NT***
Various hours available, salary range from £18,295 - £26,232 pro rata per annum

Supply Trainer Demonstrator Beauty Therapy — ***S/TD/BT***
Various hours available, salary starting at £18,963 pro rata per annum

Supply Recreation Assistants — ***S/RA***
Various hours available, salary starting at £15,085 pro rata per annum

Night Cleaners — ***08/22***
20 hours per week, salary £6.42 per hour

For an application pack please visit www.canterburycollege.ac.uk or call the Human Resources Office on 01227 811282, quoting the post reference.
Staff benifits include:

- Pensions and Life Assurance Scheme
- Sports Hall and Gym
- Proximity to Mainbus / Train Stations
- Generous Holiday Allowance
- Close to City Centre
- Staff Discount Scheme

Closing date for above posts is Monday 20th July 2009 @ 12 noon

CLICK www.canterburycollege.ac.uk/job-vacancies
CALL 01227 811282(24hr answerphone)

MidKent College

MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding individuals in the following areas:

Programme Area Leader in Catering and Hospitality — Ref: P0544

Salary: £30,204 - £33,935 per annum

We are looking to recruit an exceptional candidate to provide support to the Head of School on all Staffing, Student, Curriculum and Quality issues. The successful candidate will be able to demonstrate a significant level of competence in Teaching and Learning, have experience of the industry and have good negotiating/communication skills. The post holder will hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Lecturer in Biology — Ref: P0102

Salary: £25,895 - £29,622 pro rata
18.5 hours per week

We are looking to recruit an exceptional candidate to teach on and participate in the development of a range of Biology courses on Access, A levels and BtEC. The successful candidate will hold a relevant degree in Biology and possess or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification. We are looking for an individual with the passion to motivate our learners within their chosen field.

Lecturer in Sport — Ref: P0102

Salary: £25,895 - £29,622 per annum

The College is looking for a passionate and enthusiastic professional to join the Sports team to teach, assess and participate in the development of Sports programmes. The successful candidate will hold at least a level three qualification and have some teaching/training experience along side industrial expertise. They must hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Lecturer in Health Care — Ref: P0650

Salary: £25,895 - £29,622 pro rata
18.5 hours per week

We are looking for a passionate candidate to be involved in the delivery of a range of Health Care programmes. The successful candidate will have proven knowledge and experience within Healthcare environments and hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Lecturer in Performing Arts — Ref: P0651

Salary: £25,895 - £29,622 per annum

We are looking for an experienced, creative and dynamic individual to work as a course tutor within the Performing Arts department. The successful candidate will be involved with the development of the department, driving forward new ideas and must be able to demonstrate innovative ways of working and hold or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification.

Departmental Administrator — Ref: P0245

Salary: £12,795 £16,059 per annum/pro rata
Full time – Medway Campus
Part Time – Maidstone Campus

We are looking to recruit an Administrator/Secretary with excellent administration and organisational skills, who is able to demonstrate knowledge of office procedures and ability to use MS office packages.

Closing date: Wednesday 8 July 2009

MidKent College is working in partnership with RBLI Employment Solutions to support individuals who have a disability or health condition in the application, interview and employment with the college. If you would like any further information regarding RBLI, or require assistance with your application process then please contact RBLI on 0800 783 1144 or visit their website www.rbli.co.uk for information, advice and guidance.

The College is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and young people and expects all staff and volunteers to share this commitment. Any offer of employment is subject to a Criminal Records Bureau check in accordance with the College procedure.

Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number.

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Administration, Secretarial, PA

Receptionist/ Administrator/ Telephonist

Tonbridge
Salary: TBA
To apply/more information:
Harwoods of Edenbridge
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01732 353637
Email gwilcox@harwoods.uk.com

Departmental Administrator

Medway
Salary: £12,795 £16,059 per annum/pro rata
Closing Date: Wednesday 8 July
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0245
Tel: 01634 884402
Email
job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Part-time Receptionist/ Admin Support

Medway
Salary: £12,629-£13,703 pa, pro rata
Closing Date: 10 July 2009
To apply/more information:
Riverside Primary School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 338700
Email
office@riverside.medway.sch.uk

Management Information Services Data Administrator

Ashford
Salary: £10,181 - £17,750 per annum
Closing Date: Friday 17 July 2009
Salary: £10,181 - £17,750 per annum
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0652
Tel: 01634 884402
Email
job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Catering, Hospitality

EXPERIENCED BAR/ WAITSTAFF AND CHEFS

Thanet
Salary: TBA
EXPERIENCED WAITSTAFF AND CHEFS For the best restaurant in Thanet. Hard working, dedicated, experienced applicants only need apply. Please contact: Harriet on 01843 851515 Or email: harrietleigh@gmail.com
To apply/more information:
Age & Sons
Quoting Job Ref: KOS
Tel: 01843 851515
Email harrietleigh@gmail.com

Child Care

Deputy Manager

Thanet
Salary: Circa 18,500k to 19,500k pa
Salary Range DEPUTY - Circa 18,500k to 19,500k pa plus increments
To apply/more information:
Bene Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 369089
Email info@benecareltd.co.uk

Construction, Architecture, Surveyors

PROPERTY PROFESSIONAL

Kent
Salary: See below
To apply/more information:
Martin Tait Redheads
Quoting Job Ref: KOS
Tel: 020 8335 1700
Email
applications@kosmedia.co.uk

ESTIMATOR/SURVEYOR

Hythe
Salary: See below
Owing to a retirement an opportunity exists for a highly motivated person to join a long established building company carrying out contracts up to the value of £1,000,000. Applicants must demonstrate a good working knowledge of the industry, be able to work to deadlines and have good communication skills. A permanent position is available for the successful applicant. Apply in writing enclosing CV and references
To apply/more information:
Charlier Construction
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 268211
Email
applications@kosmedia.co.uk

CARPENTER

Hythe
Salary: TBA
As a result of an increase in our workload, a Carpenter is required for our building department. Applicants must be apprenticed trained and have A sound knowledge of their trade. Apply in writing enclosing CV and references
To apply/more information:
Charlier Construction
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01303 268211
Email
applications@kosmedia.co.uk

Customer Service, Call Centre

SALES AGENTS and CUSTOMER SERVICE AGENTS

Folkestone
Salary: See Below
Closing Date: 24 July 2009
To apply/more information:
Saga
Quoting Job Ref: DC316/KOS
Tel: 01303 774888
Email
recruitment@directchoice.co.uk

Domestic

Caretaker

Medway
Salary: £14,891-£18,937 pa
Closing Date: 10 July 2009
To apply/more information:
Riverside Primary School
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 338700
Email
office@riverside.medway.sch.uk

Education, Teacher, School

Teaching Assistant

Aylesford
Salary: Kent Scheme 3
Closing Date: 10th July 2009
To apply/more information:
Jill McKenna
Aylesford School - Sports College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 717341
Email jill.mckenna@
aylesford.kent.sch.uk

Part time Internal Verifiers

Medway
Salary: £16.05 per hour
To apply/more information:
Medway Council
Quoting Job Ref: KOS
Tel: 01634 338423
Email
christine.osborne@medway.gov.uk

Programme Area Leader in Catering and Hospitality

Medway
Salary: £30,204 - £33,935 per annum
Closing Date: Wednesday 8 July
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0544
Tel: 01634 884402
Email
job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Lecturer in Biology

Medway
Salary: £25,895 - £29,622 pro rata
Closing Date: Wednesday 8 July 18.5 hours per week We are looking to recruit an exceptional candidate to teach on and participate in the development of a range of Biology courses on Access, A levels and BtEC. The successful candidate will hold a relevant degree in Biology and possess or be willing to work towards a recognised teaching qualification. We are looking for an individual with the passion to motivate our learners within their chosen field. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. Mid-Kent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0102
Tel: 01634 884402
Email
job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Finding staff
24-7
JobsforKent.co.uk
To advertise in this section or online
01303 817040

Lecturer in Sport

Medway
Salary: £25,895 - £29,622 per annum
Closing Date: Wednesday 8 July
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0102
Tel: 01634 884402
Email
job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Lecturer in Health Care

Medway
Salary: £25,895 - £29,622 pro rata
Closing Date: Wednesday 8 July
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0650
Tel: 01634 884402
Email
job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Lecturer in Performing Arts

Medway
Salary: £25,895 - £29,622 per annum
Closing Date: Wednesday 8 July
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: P0651
Tel: 01634 884402
Email
job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Laboratory Technician

Thanet
Salary: £13,959 - £15,826 pro-rata
Closing Date: Thursday 9rd July 2009
To apply/more information:
Ursuline College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Email info1@ursuline.kent.sch.uk

Apprentices

Medway
Salary: £6,171
MidKent College based in the Medway Towns and Maidstone is seeking to appoint outstanding apprentices in the following areas: Customer Service Administration Plumbing Carpentry/Joinery Hairdressing Painting and Decorating Training allowance: £6,171 Successful candidates will work towards the apprentice framework including a relevant NVQ Level within their chosen subject. We are looking for enthusiastic individuals who will benefit from learning whilst working in a stimulating environment. All apprentice roles are to start 1 September 2009. Interviews are scheduled to take place the week beginning 20 July 2009. Application forms and further details are available from www.midkent.ac.uk. Alternatively, please e-mail job.applications@midkent.ac.uk. For individuals without access to e-mail or the internet please call the Personnel department on 01634 884402 (24 hour answer machine). In all communication with the College please quote the appropriate job title and reference number. MidKent College is an equal opportunities employer
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 884402
Email
job.applications@midkent.ac.uk

Learning Support Assistants in AEN and Science

Canterbury
Salary: £14,169 - £16,064 pro rata
Closing Date: noon, Wednesday 8th July 2009
37 hours per week 8.30 - 4.30 Mon - Thurs 8.30 - 4.00 Fri term time + inset We are seeking to appoint two Learning Support Assistants; one to join our successful Support & Guidance Team, to work with students who have a wide range of additional educational needs, and one to support students with Science. Energetic and a champion of children, you will have an interest in science and experience of working with students with additional educational needs. The ability to work well under pressure is essential as are excellent organisational, interpersonal and communication skills. Further details and application forms are available on our website www.spiresacademy.com Alternatively, contact Marion Wigington on 01227 710392 or email on m.wigington@ spiresacademy.com to request an application pack. Interview date: Wednesday 15th July 2009. Spires Academy is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of young people and expects all staff to share this commitment. The successful applicant will be subject to appropriate child protection screening including checks with previous employers and the Criminal Records Bureau.
To apply/more information:
Spires Academy
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 710392
Email
m.wigington@spiresacademy.com

HR, Recruitment

HR Adviser

Medway
Salary: £29,559-£36,630
Closing Date: Mid-day July 15th 2009
To apply/more information:
Mid Kent College
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01634 884511
Email
caroline.stark@midkent.ac.uk

Not for profit, Charities

Operations Manager

Kent
Salary: £38,463 - £41,083
Closing Date: 31/07/09
Operations Manager Hours of work: 37hrs per week Salary: £38,463 - £41,083 NJC Paypoint 46- 49 Responsible to and deputise on behalf of the Chief Executive Officer for the delegated management of East Kent Mencap's Operational Services in line with the vision and values of the Charity. We are seeking a skilled and experienced professional Manager, with a wide network of contacts, to support the Chief Executive Officer develop the Charities existing and projected services. The successful applicant will support the development of a wide range of services for Children and Adults with learning disabilities as well as Carers. You will have the ability to work under pressure and at a senior level with key agencies. A sound knowledge and practical application in leading diverse teams through change processes is required. The post holder will, at times, be expected to work during the evening and weekends. For an application pack please contact Lynda Salisbury on 01843-224482 or email Lynda.Salisbury@eastkentmencap.co.uk. We are unable to accept applications via curriculum vitae.
To apply/more information:
Lynda Salisbury
East Kent Mencap
Quoting Job Ref: OPM0001
Tel: 01843-224482
Email Lynda.Salisbury@
eastkentmencap.co.uk

Team Leader - Housing Services

Thanet
Salary: £17421.40 - £22937.31
Closing Date: 24/07/09
To apply/more information:
Lynda Salisbury
East Kent Mencap
Quoting Job Ref: HSL0001
Tel: 01843-224482
Email Lynda.Salisbury@
eastkentmencap.co.uk

Nursing, Medicine, Care Work

Registered Nurse

Herne Bay
Salary: £10.75 per hour to £17.04 per hour
Closing Date: 13th July 2009
Take the opportunity to nurse, where you are expected and resourced to provide: • A person centred approach to independence, well-being and choice • Every hour of work is stretching and fulfilling • Nurses and therapists lead a complex service for people with physical disabilities, long term neurological and similar conditions • Your professionalism makes a difference • Your development is expected and supported • You will feel like you've changed your life for the better Strode Park Foundation not-for-profit Charity status directs all resources back into the service you run and the award-winning working environment is superb. Salary Range £10.75 per hour to £17.04 per hour Fully Flexible 37.5 hours per week Holiday entitlemnent of 25 days Company pension scheme Call 01227 373292 for an informal chat with John Cotterill, Director of Care or alternatively email: recruitment@strodepark.org.uk for an application pack.
To apply/more information:
Strode Park Foundation
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 373292
Email
recruitment@strodepark.org.uk

Bank Staff

Herne Bay
Salary: £6.17 per hour to £6.83 per hour
Closing Date: 13th July 2009
Strode Park Foundation has a new opportunity for Bank staff to offer care and support to people with physical disabilities. Great opportunity to work when you want! We offer a variety of shifts to suit your needs. Rates of pay from £6.17 per hour to £6.83 per hour Interested! Then visit our website www.strodepark.org.uk for more details or alternatively email: Sandra.Wiltshire@strodepark.org.uk
To apply/more information:
Strode Park Foundation
Quoting Job Ref: KOS
Email Sandra.Wiltshire@
strodepark.org.uk

YOUNG CARERS SUPPORT OFFICER(S)

Sheerness
Salary: TBA
Closing Date: 10am 10th July
Due to forthcoming Maternity Cover(s), Swale Carers Centre is looking to appoint 1 x full time and 1 x part time Young Carers Support Officers, with effect August 2009 – May 2010. There is likely to be the potential for 'Job Share' opportunities following this period, details to be agreed. **Salary:** £18,250 pro-rata Hours: Full-time 37 hours per week / Part-time 10 hours per week - to include evening and occasional weekend working to suit the needs of the service Entitlements: Essential Car Users Allowance, Pension Contribution, 25 days Annual Leave (pro-rata) For further information and an information pack, please contact Sandie Hornby our Chief Operations Officer on 01795 583440 or sandie.hornby@swalecarers.org.uk Completed application forms to be received not later than 10am 10th July, interviews will be held 17th July at Swale Carers Centre.
To apply/more information:
Swale Carers Centre
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01795 583440
Email
sandie.hornby@swalecarers.org.uk

Form F assessors

Herne Bay
Salary: TBA
Form F assessors required for a new and dynamic fostering agency based in Herne Bay. We are looking for Qualified Social Workers preferably with Fostering experience, afriendly disposition and very good communication skills, to join our caring and professional team. Please Contact Kathryn Davenport on 07753 - 787391 for further information. kd@bencarefostering.co.uk. In addition * REGULATION 33 (STANDARD 32) INSPECTOR ALSO REQUIRED TO MONITOR QUALITY ASSURANCE WITHIN OUR RESIDENTIAL SERVICES. Contact Steve Richmond Director Benecare Ltd on 07710 145 802 or 01892 740886
To apply/more information:
Bene Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01892 740886
Email kd@bencarefostering.co.uk

Residential Support Workers - Childcare

Thanet
Salary: TBA
Salary Range RSW - Circa 11,620k 14,500k p.a - plus increments WE are an established and developing therapeutic Residential Children's Home in East Kent. WE are looking for colleagues who can grow and learn with us to provide exceptional quality care for children and young people. WE are looking to increase our provision YOU want to be a committed Residential Social Care Professional able to deal constructively with challenges set by children and young people between the ages of 8 - 18 in a care home setting. QUALIFICATIONS: NVQ 3 or equivalent is preferable. However Training will be provided for applicants with evident potential and / or relevant experience. CONTACT Manager Lyn Gibbs on 01227 369089 For further information and application details. Email info@benecareltd.co.uk www.benecareltd.co.uk
To apply/more information:
Bene Care
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01227 369089
Email info@benecareltd.co.uk

Retail, Wholesale, Sales

Freelance Beauty/ Colour Consultants

Faversham
Salary: TBA
To apply/more information:
Take Action
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 07818066594
Email
applications@kosmedia.co.uk

Transport, Logistics, Aviation

Coach (PCV) Driver

Hythe
Salary: £9.00ph
Coach drivers required for general coackwork for our client based in Hythe. Duties will include school runs and private hire work, driving on set routes, transporting passengers to and from designated locations. Hours of work Monday to Friday, 0500 - 0800 sarts. £9.00/hr PAYE, Guaranteed 8hrs, Limited Company Drivers welcome. Drivers must be of a smart appearance, and have a pleasant demeanour as will be dealing with members of the public. For insurance purposes, applicants must be 25 or older, have held their PCV licence for 2 years, have driven PCV for at least 6 months within the last 2 years, and have no more than 6 points for minor endorsements (no DRs or DDs).
To apply/more information:
Alex/Andy-Best Connection Agency
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 664999
Email maidstone@
thebestconnection.co.uk

Coach (PCV) Driver

Aylesford
Salary: 9.00/hr
To apply/more information:
Alex/Andy-Best Connection Agency
Quoting Job Ref: kos
Tel: 01622 664999
Email maidstone@
thebestconnection.co.uk

PUBLIC NOTICES

Kent County Council Sustainable Transport Team invites expressions of interest to tender for Bikeability pupil and instructor training for school year 2009/10.

Kent County Council is seeking expressions of interest from suitably experienced and qualified organisations to provide Bikeability pupil and instructor training. The training is expected to commence from September 2009 until 31st March 2010.

Expressions of interest should be made by visiting https://www.businessportal.southeastiep.gov.uk, reference number OS-DNWA-7TAJBD. The closing date for expressions of interest is 30th July. Tenders will be issued to applicants on Monday 3rd August and the closing date for receipt of tenders is 24th August.

Kent County Council

To advertise in this section
01303 817040

TONBRIDGE AND MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL
APPOINTMENT OF TAXI RANKS

Notice is hereby given pursuant to section 63 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976 that the Council intends to appoint the following additional taxi ranks:

Location (1)	Description (2)	Times (3)	Numbers of vehicles (4)
Avebury Avenue, Tonbridge	South side between High St and River Lawn Rd	At all times	3
Botany, Tonbridge	Turning head on north side	At all times	2
Bradford Street, Tonbridge	South side between High St and River Walk	At all times	2
Railway Approach, Tonbridge	West side between rail station and Barden Road	At all times	9
River Walk, Tonbridge	West side between Bradford St and New Wharf Rd	At all times	2
High Street, Tonbridge	East side north of Lyons Crescent	At all times	2

The Council further intends to (i) revoke the appointment of the hackney carriage stand for 2 vehicles at Railway Approach, Tonbridge, made by the Council on 10 August 2004 and (ii) vary the appointment of the hackney carriage stand for 11 vehicles at Waterloo Road, Tonbridge, by extending the stand to a double width stand for up to 21 vehicles.

Any person who wishes to make representations or objections in respect of these proposals should write to the Chief Solicitor, Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ, to arrive no later than 12 Noon on 3 August 2009.

David Hughes, Chief Executive.

5 July 2009

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

Highways - District of Ashford

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(ROMDEN ROAD, SMARDEN) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the reconstruction of Barkley Bridge over a River Beult tributary, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Romden Road, Smarden, between the junctions of Buffalo Lane and Wissenden Lane, on or after 20 July 2009, for an estimated period of 12 weeks or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Romden Road, Wissenden Lane, School Road, Ashford Road, Bull Lane, Smarden Road, Bethersden Road, Buckmans Green Lane and Romden Road.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(HUNTER AVENUE, ASHFORD) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the installation of a new wastewater pipeline, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Hunter Avenue, Ashford between the junctions of Bentley Road and Twelve Acres, on or after 6 July 2009, for an estimated period of 3 weeks or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Twelve Acres, Breadlands Road, Osborne Road and Bentley Road.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(HUNTER AVENUE, ASHFORD) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of the installation of a new waste water pipeline, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Hunter Avenue, Ashford, between the junctions of Twelve Acres and Hunter Close, on or after 20 July 2009, for an estimated period of two weeks or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Hunter Avenue, Osborne Road, Breadlands Road and Twelve Acres.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(GRANGE ROAD, TENTERDEN) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Footway works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Grange Road, Tenterden from Shoreham Lane to Ashford Road on 6 July 2009 for an estimated period of two weeks or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Ashford Road and Shoreham Lane.

This order will come into force on Monday 6 July 2009, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected, and will remain valid for a maximum period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature at any time for the duration of the order.

Highways - District of Canterbury

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(NORTH HOLMES ROAD, CANTERBURY) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Gas Mains Replacement works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting through traffic on North Holmes Road from the junction of St. Martin's Avenue to St. Martin's Hill on or after 20 July 2009 for an estimated period of 6 weeks or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via North Holmes Road, Havelock Street, Monastery Street, Longport.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(LINK ROAD, TYLER HILL, CANTERBURY) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Gas Mains Replacement works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting through traffic on Link Road, Tyler Hill, Canterbury on or after 6 July 2009 for an estimated period of three weeks or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Hackington Road, Wood Hill and Calais Hill.

Highways - Borough of Dartford

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL (PROHIBITION OF U -TURNS) (PRINCES ROAD AND SHEPHERDS LANE, DARTFORD) (TRAFFIC REGULATION) ORDER 2009

Notice is hereby given that KENT COUNTY COUNCIL proposed to make an Order under sections 1(1) and (2), 2(1) to (3) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with Paragraph 20 of Schedule 9 to the Act:

The Order will prohibit any vehicle making a U-Turn at the junction of Princes Road and Shepherds Lane in any direction.

Full details are contained in the draft Orders which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Orders may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at of Dartford Borough Council Offices, Civic Centre, Home Gardens, Dartford, DA1 1DR and at Invicta House, Maidstone during normal opening times.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send the grounds in writing to the Kent Highway Services, Double Day House, St Michaels Close, Aylesford. ME20 7BU or by email to Juliancook@kent.gov.uk noon on Monday 27 June 2009.

Highways - District of Dover

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, DOVER) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Footway works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Various roads, Dover from as described in column 1 of the attached schedule on or after 20 July 2009 for an estimated period of as described in column 3 of the attached schedule or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via as described in column 2 of the attached schedule.

The Affected Route	The Alternative Route	Date & Times of Road Closure
Tower Hamlets Road Whole length	A256 High Street, London Road, Buckland Avenue, Barton Road, Frith Road, Charlton Green, Maison Dieu Road, Eastbrook Place, Woolcomber Street, A20 Townwall Street, York Street, B2011 Folkestone Road, Elms Vale Road, Eaton Road, Astor Avenue and Tower Street	20 July 2009 for four weeks
Tower Street Whole length	West Street, Widred Road, Edred Road, Noah's Ark Terrace, Goschen Road and Astor Avenue	10 August 2009 for three weeks

This order will come into force on Monday 20 July 2009, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected, and will remain valid for a maximum period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above-mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature at any time for the duration of the order.

Highways - Borough of Gravesham

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
ECHO SQUARE, WHITEHILL ROAD, SUN LANE, CROSS LANE EAST AND OLD ROAD EAST, GRAVESEND (TEMPORARY PROHIBITION & RESTRICTION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that owing to the likelihood of danger to the public whilst works are carried out on or near the highway the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by vehicular traffic on Echo Square, Whitehill Road, Sun Lane, Cross Lane East and Old Road East Gravesend, as per the attached schedule.

The Order will become effective on 6th July 2009, will be in operation and remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months, the works are planned to last a total of 16 weeks from the date above. These closures and restrictions will be effective when the appropriate signage is in place.

The alternative routes for the routes described will be as noted in column two of the attached schedule.

The purpose of the Order is to facilitate the replacement of a gas main.

Schedule

Stage Description	Diversion Route
Stage One: Whitehill Road - Traffic restricted southbound between Hollybush Road and Echo Square Laurel Avenue - Closed at its junction with Whitehill Road Canterbury Road - No right turn into Whitehill Road Coombe Road - No left turn into Whitehill Road St Marys Road - No left turn into Whitehill Road	Stage One: Sun Lane, Sharland Road, Whitehill Road and Hollybush Lane
Stage Two and Three: Whitehill Road - No entry from Echo Square roundabout Sun Lane - Traffic restricted northbound between Portland Avenue and Echo Square Roundabout	Stage Two and Three: Sun Lane, Sharland Road and Whitehill Road and Portland Avenue, Central Avenue and Cross Lane East
Stage Four and Five: Cross Lane East - Closed at junction with Echo Square Roundabout	Stage Four and Five: Devonshire Road, Old Road East from junction Cross Lane East/Devonshire Road
Stage Six: Cross Lane East - Ship Road closed at junction with Old Road East Old Road East - Closed to Westbound traffic from Echo Square roundabout to Spring Grove	Stage Six: Parrock Road, Parrock Street, Lord Street, Windmill Street, Old Road East

Highways - Borough of Maidstone

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(STILEBRIDGE LANE, MARDEN) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Stilebridge Lane, Marden from the junction of Staplehurst Road to Stilebridge Barn on or after Monday 20th July 2009 for a period of up to 1 week or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for westbound traffic via A229 Staplehurst Road, B2079 Maidstone Road, Underlyn Lane, Stilebridge Lane and for eastbound traffic vice versa.

BT Openreach apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary for cabling works in the area. Should you require any further information about these works, their contact is Neill Dryland of McNicholas Construction on 01795 437805.

For further information or comment please call Kent Highway Services on 08458 247 800.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, MAIDSTONE) (SPEED LIMITS) (CONSOLIDATION) (AMENDMENT No 1) ORDER 2009

Notice is hereby given that the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL proposes to make the above named Order under section 84(1), (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, (hereinafter called "the Act") and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with paragraph 20 of Part III of Schedule 9 to the Act,

The effect of the proposed Order will introduce a 30 mph speed limit on the following lengths of road.

Name of Road	Length of road affected
BRAY GARDENS	From the junction with Waldron Drive for the entire length
PENFOLD WAY	From the junction with Valley Drive for the entire length
VALLEY DRIVE	From the junction with Waldron Drive for the entire length
WALDRON DRIVE	From the junction with Lancet Lane for the entire

Full details are contained in the draft Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Kent Highway Services, Double Day House, St Michaels Close, Aylesford ME20 7BU and at Invicta House, Maidstone during normal opening times.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send the grounds in writing to the Kent Highway Services, Double Day House, St Michaels Close, Aylesford ME20 7BU or by email to Michael.heath@kent.gov.uk noon on Monday 27 June 2009.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(GRAVELLY BOTTOM ROAD, KINGSWOOD) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on Gravelly Bottom Road from Ulcombe Road, Pitt Road to the junction of Broomfield Road on or after Monday 6th July 2009 for a period of up to 5 days or until such works are completed.

The alternative route for the route described above is for westbound traffic via Broomfield Road, Chartway Street, Pitt Road, and for eastbound traffic vice versa.

BT apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary to renew 400 meters of aerial cable. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is Tracy Zeal on 08700 500792.

Highways - District of Shepway

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(PAY STREET, ACRISE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because drainage and carriageway maintanence works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Pay Street, Acrise from the junction of School Road to outside and opposite the property known as Roods Meadow on or after 20 July 2009 for an estimated period of 5 days or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via School Road, Coach Road and Pay Street (Swingfield).

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(BOURNEMOUTH ROAD, FOLKESTONE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because drainage works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Bournemouth Road, Folkestone from the junction of Radnor Park Crescent to the junction with Victoria Road on or after 13 July 2009 for an estimated period of 5 days or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Bournemouth Gardens, Boscombe Road and Ship Street.

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(HOSPITAL HILL, HYTHE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Footway works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Hospital Hill, Hythe from its junction with Seabrook Road to its junction with Upper Corniche on 6 July 2009 for an estimated period of eleven weeks or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via West Road, North Road, Military Road, Sandgate High Street and Sandgate Esplanade.

Highways - District of Swale

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(SWALE AVENUE, RUSHENDEN) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING)TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Carriageway Surfacing works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Swale Avenue, Rushenden for its entire length between the junctions with Well Road and Rushenden Road between 6 and 20 July 2009 for an estimated period of one day as advisd by the appropriate signage on site or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Well Road, First Avenue and Rushenden Road.

This order will come into force on Monday 6 July 2009, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected on site and will remain valid for a period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature at any time for the duration of the order.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(SWANSTREE AVENUE, SITTINGBOURNE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because of modifications to the road junction, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Swanstree Avenue, Sittingbourne, at the junction with Canterbury Road, on or after 20 July 2009 for an estimated period of 6 weeks or until the works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Canterbury Road, Rectory Road and Swanstree Avenue.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(LOVE LANE, MINSTER, SHEPPEY HOSPITAL) (20MPH SPEED LIMIT) ORDER 2009

Notice is hereby given that the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL proposes to make the above named Orders under section 84(1), (2) of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, (hereinafter called the Act? and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with paragraph 20 of Part III of Schedule 9 to the Act.

The effect of the proposed Order will introduce a 20 mph speed limit in Sheppey Hospital Development on the following roads:

• Haywood Avenue Entire length • Lady Winter Drive Entire length
• Cliffhouse Avenue Entire length • Nunnery Grove Entire length

Full details are contained in the draft Orders which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Orders may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Technical Services, Council Offices, Swale House, East Street, Sittingbourne, Kent, ME10 3HT 12 noon on Monday and at Invicta House, Maidstone.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send the grounds in writing to Robert Mowl, Kent Highway Services, Ashford Highway Depot, Javelin Way, Henwood Industrial Estate, Ashford, TN24 8AD or by email to Robert.mowl@kent.gov.uk by noon on Monday 27 July 2009.

Highways - District of Thanet

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(ASHBURNHAM ROAD, RAMSGATE) (PROHIBITION OF DRIVING) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because Footway works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council has made an Order prohibiting traffic on Ashburnham Road, Ramsgate from Southwood Road to Chapel Road on or after 6 Jul 2009 for an estimated period of one week or until such works are complete.

The alternative route for through traffic will be via Ashburnham Road, High Street St Lawrence and Chapel Road.

This order will come into force on Monday 6 July 2009, will be in operation when the appropriate signs are erected and will remain valid for a period of eighteen months. The order will allow the above mentioned restrictions to be implemented as and when required for works of a similar nature at any time for the duration of the order.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, THANET) (WAITING RESTRICTIONS AND STREET PARKING PLACES) (CONSOLIDATION) (AMENDMENT No 21) ORDER 2009

Notice is hereby given that KENT COUNTY COUNCIL propose to make the above named Order under sections 1(1), 2(1) to (3), 3(2), 4(1) and (2), 32(1), 35(1), 45, 46, 49 and 53 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984, and of all other enabling powers, and after consultation with the chief officer of police in accordance with Paragraph 20 of Schedule 9 to the Act:

The effect of the Order will be to introduce no waiting at any time (double yellow lines) on the following lengths of road:-

Fitzroy Avenue: on both sides from the junction with Upper Dane Road for a distance of 12 metres in a north easterly direction.

Upper Dane Road: on the north eastern side between points 12 metres north west and 6 metres south east of the junction with Fitzroy Avenue.

Full details are contained in the draft Order which, together with the relevant plans, any Orders amended by the proposals and a statement of reasons for proposing to make the Order may be examined on Mondays to Fridays at Kent Highway Services, Javelin Way, Ashford, TN24 8AD, between 8.30am and 5.00pm, and at Thanet District Council, Cecil Street, Margate, during normal opening times.

If you wish to offer support for or object to the proposed Order you should send the grounds in writing to the Transport and Development Team Leader, Kent Highway Services, Javelin Way, Ashford, TN24 8AD or by email to t&d.canterbury.thanet@kent.gov.uk by noon on Monday 27 July 2009.

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(NEWINGTON ROAD, RAMSGATE) (PROHIBITION OF PEDESTRIANS) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

Notice is hereby given that because gas main replacement works are proposed to be carried out, the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting traffic on Newington Road, Ramsgate from footpath outside Nos 172-228 Newington Road on or after 20 July 2009 for an estimated period of six weeks or until such works are complete. The Order will remain valid for a maximum period of 18 months.

The alternative route for pedestrians will be advised by the appropriate on site signage.

Highways - Borough of Tonbridge & Malling

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(VARIOUS ROADS, TONBRIDGE AND MALLING)(WAITING RESTRICTIONS AND ON-STREET PARKING) (SNODLAND PARKING PLAN) (AMENDMENT No. 2) ORDER 2009

Notice is hereby given that the KENT COUNTY COUNCIL acting as the local traffic authority and in exercise of its powers under Sections 1, 2, 3, 4, 32, 35, 45, 46, 49 and 53 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 as amended, and of all other enabling powers and after consultation with the Chief Officer of Police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 to the said Act, made the above Order on 30th June 2009. The effect of the Order is to implement the approved Snodland Local Parking Plan in the following roads:

Birling Road, Bramley Road, Brook Lane, Brook Street, Catts Alley, Cemetery Road, Charles Close, Church Field, Clock Tower Mews, Constitution Hill, Dryland Road, East Street, Godden Road, Hammonds Square, High Street, Holborough Road, Hollow Lane, Hook Road, Godden Road, Kent Road, Lakeside, Lucas Road, Malling Road, Mill Street, Nevill Road, Norman Road, Paddlesworth Road, Pout Road, Queens Avenue, Queens Road, Recreation Avenue, Rectory Close, Roberts Road, Rocfort Road, Rookery Hill, Saltings Road, St Benedict Road, St Katherines Lane, The Groves, Thomson Close, Tomlin Close, Waghorn Road, Willowside and Woodlands Avenue

1. The Order will:

a. Revoke unnecessary lengths of single yellow and double yellow lines to provide more roadside parking opportunity.

b. Install new DYL to protect certain bends, junction access and sight lines; promote the free flow of traffic; and prevent obstruction

c. Introduce permitted parking areas with uncontrolled bay markings (no time limits) to make the best use of available roadside parking space in the town centre and identified residential areas

2. The Order also has specific measures at the following sites:

a. Moving the existing dedicated Disabled Persons Parking Bay (DPPB) in the High Street (east) to the High Street end of the Public Car Park and replacing it with short stay waiting

b. Provide an additional DPPB in High Street (west) lay by, near the Chemist.

c. Control obstructive parking around school sites in Malling Road, Roberts Road and St Katherines' Lane.

d. Preserve access and loading facilities for local shops

e. Rationalise short-stay, time-limited, daytime waiting in High Street, Holborough Road, Malling Road and Rocfort Road.

The Order will contain the usual exemptions to enable a vehicle to wait with police permission or for passengers to board or alight, for the loading and unloading of goods, for enabling work to be carried out in or adjacent to the road, for disabled persons and for emergency vehicles.

A copy of the Order together with a map, a copy of any Orders which will be amended by the Order, and a copy of the Councils reasons for making the Order, may be inspected during normal office hours at the offices of Tonbridge and Malling Council Offices, Kings Hill, West Malling or Tonbridge Castle and the Kent County Council, Invicta House, County Hall, Maidstone, Kent.

Anyone wishing to question the validity of the Order or of any of its provisions on the grounds that they are not within the powers conferred by the Act of 1984 as amended, or that any requirement of the Act of 1984 or any instrument made there under has not been complied with may, within six weeks from the date of the Order, make application for that purpose to the High Court. The Order will come into effect on Monday 6th July 2009.

Tonbridge and Malling Borough Council Parking Action Plan

The Snodland Parking Plan is a community built project developed through consultation with local people, Snodland Town Council, The Snodland Partnership and Snodland Chamber of Commerce

Highways - Borough of Tunbridge Wells

THE KENT COUNTY COUNCIL
(A26 LONDON ROAD, MAJOR YORKS ROAD & CASTLE ROAD, TUNBRIDGE WELLS) (PROHIBITION OF TRAFFIC AND WAITING ORDER) (SUSPENSION OF ONE WAY ORDER) TEMPORARY ORDER 2009 THE ROAD TRAFFIC REGULATION ACT 1984 AS AMENDED BY THE ROAD TRAFFIC (TEMPORARY RESTRICTIONS) ACT 1991

NOTICE is hereby given that because works are proposed to be carried out on or near a road the Kent County Council intends to make an Order prohibiting the use by through traffic on A26 London Road, Tunbridge Wells between the junctions of Nevill Street and Major Yorks Road and there will be temporary prohibition of waiting on Major Yorks Road for its entire length on both sides on or after Monday 20th July 2009 for a period of up to 6 weeks or until such works are completed. The one way order on Castle Road is temporarily suspended during the closure to allow for access.

The alternative route for the route described above is for HGV traffic via A26 Nevill Street, Frant Road, Bunny Lane, Eridge Road and for local traffic and buses via A26 London Road, Church Road, Mount Ephraim, Major Yorks Road. Also local diversions via other roads will be in place during the restriction.

Southern Gas Networks apologise for any inconvenience caused by these essential works, which are necessary for gas mains replacement. Should you require any further information about these works, the contact is John Adsley on 07774 983419.

For further information, please contact Kent Highway Services, on 08458 247 800 (local rate) or visit www.kent.gov.uk/highways

Kent Highway Services

COOL JEEVES LIMITED
Company Number 04268227

Notice is hereby given, pursuant to Section 98 of the Insolvency Act 1986 that a meeting of the creditors of the above-named Company will be held at Judd House, 16 East Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1HG, on Thursday 16 July 2009, at 10.15 am for the purposes mentioned in Sections 100 and 101 of the said Act. Forms of proxy to be used at the Meeting, accompanied by a statement of claim, must be lodged at the offices of Vantis Business Recovery Services, Judd House, 16 East Street, Tonbridge, Kent TN9 1HG, the registered office of the Company, not later than 12.00 noon on Wednesday 15 July 2009. Mark Newman of Vantis Business Recovery Services is a person qualified to act as an Insolvency Practitioner in relation to the Company who during the period before the day on which the meeting is to be held, will furnish creditors, free of charge, with such information concerning the Company's affairs as they may reasonably require.

Dated 24 June 2009
By Order of the Board
Graham Alan Jeeves, Director

Maidstone County Court
No. 13 of 2008
(In Bankruptcy)
ROBERT CHARLES TOMPSETT
Musician & Casual Theatre Technician - c/o 66 Halstead Walk, Maidstone, Kent ME16 0PW lately residing at 31 Tovil Road, Maidstone, Kent, ME15 6QL previously trading in a partnership.
Bankruptcy order dated 29 January 2008

Notice is hereby given that the Joint Trustees of the above-named bankrupt, appointed by the Secretary of State on 15th August 2008, intend within four months from 31st July 2009, to declare a first and final dividend to the Creditors of the said bankrupt and that any such Creditor desiring to participate in such dividend must on or before that date send in his full name and address and full particulars of his debt or claim to the undersigned Richard John Hill of KPMG LLP, Dukes Keep, Marsh Lane, Southampton, SO14 3EX, the Joint Trustee of the said bankrupt.

Dated: 26th June 2009
Richard John Hill, Joint Trustee

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACTS – NOTICES OF APPLICATIONS

The following applications have been submitted to the Council and are being advertised for the reason(s) given in each case.

TM/09/00757/LB – 161 Norman Road West Malling Kent ME19 6RW – Mr David Lewrey is applying for Listed Building Application: Replacement of front door due to rot and water ingress and replacement rear windows (kitchen, bathroom and rear bedroom) due to rot and prevent weather ingress. Reason: LB

TM/09/01225/FL – 24 Douces Manor St Leonards Street West Malling Kent ME19 6UB – Mrs Seys Phillips is applying for insertion of a new window to provide fire escape from bedroom. Reason: HH CA LB

TM/09/01243/FL & TM/09/01248/LB – 238 Tonbridge Road Wateringbury Maidstone Kent ME18 5NY – Mrs Karen Hubble is applying for Retrospective Planning & Listed Building Applications: Re-establishment of lean-to outbuilding to rear of property. Reason: CA LB HH

TM/09/00808/FL – Sports Ground Holborough Road Snodland Kent – Mr Raymond Pettitt is applying for two storey extension to cricket pavilion. Reason: CA

TM/09/01487/FL – Land East Of Teston Road Teston Road West Malling Kent – Mr E Barton is applying for change of use of land for stationing of one static caravan and two touring caravans for residential occupation by single gypsy family and associated utility shed, storage shed, septic tank, hard standing and pathways and recessed gateway to site. Reason: DEPART

TM/09/01229/FL & TM/09/01230/LB – 21 Douces Manor St Leonards Street West Malling Kent ME19 6UB – Mrs Shields are applying for Insertion of new windows to dining room and bedroom 3. Reason: LB CA HH

TM/09/00912/LB – Little Holborough Holborough Road Snodland Kent ME6 5PJ – Lafarge Cement UK PLC are applying for Listed Building Application: Replace stolen and damaged roof and chimney lead flashings. Reason: CA LB

TM/09/01353/FL – Hidden Cottage High Cross Road Ivy Hatch Sevenoaks Kent TN15 0NR – Mr David Wootton is applying for detached garage. Reason: CA HH LB

TM/09/01422/FL – Three Firs Ismays Road Ightham Sevenoaks Kent TN15 9BB – Mr And Mrs D Percy are applying for reconstruction of garage on site of former (previously demolished) garage Resubmission of TM08/01296/FL. Reason: HH CA

TM/09/01008/FL – Margaret Mcmillan House Gravesend Road Wrotham Sevenoaks Kent TN15 7JL – Mr Mike Penny is applying for removal of existing single storey modular building and replacement with new single storey modular classroom structure on different part of the site. Reason: LB

Reasons for the case being publicised:

LB	Application relates to/affects a Listed Building or its setting
CA	Application is within/affects a Conservation Area
DEPART	Application does not accord with the Development Plan
HH	Householder application - As this is a householder application, in the event of an appeal against a refusal of planning permission, which is to be dealt with on the basis of representations in writing, any representations made about this application will be sent to the Secretary of State, and there will be no further opportunity to comment at appeal stage.

These applications are displayed on our website www.tmbc.gov.uk – click on the button "Online Planning" (then View Existing Applications and select Public Access). You can submit your comments by emailing to planning.applications@tmbc.gov.uk (please quote the application number by the date set out below). Please note that we will publish a copy of any representations received on the Council's website, including your name and address.

Copies of applications listed may be seen during office hours (8.30 am and 5.00 pm Monday to Friday). Any applications within Hadlow, Hildenborough and Tonbridge are available at Tonbridge Castle, Tonbridge. Other applications are available at the office of the Director of Planning, Transport & Leisure, Gibson Building, Gibson Drive, Kings Hill, West Malling, Kent, ME19 4LZ. Any representations should be made in writing quoting the application number by 26 July 2009.

David Hughes
Chief Executive
5 July 2009

TONBRIDGE & MALLING BOROUGH COUNCIL

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2010 Range Rover aims to tame the 4x4 market

By **STEVE LOADER**

THERE could be a better time to launch a new-look Range Rover.

It would be a time when global recession does not hog headlines and key motoring messages are not downsizing, fuel-saving and lower emissions.

However, the world's favourite luxury 4x4 and the car with as much claim now to the prestigious RR initials as a certain Rolls-Royce, has something to shout about as the 2010 range arrives in showrooms this month.

Specifications have had a boost – though prices have also crept up too – and there is a new flagship engine.

On the face of it, this new supercharged 5.0-litre V8 petrol unit would seem to be the last option desired by even well-heeled RR customers – most will opt for the familiar 3.6-litre TDV8 unit carried over from last year's range.

However, Land Rover insists that the new petrol V8, developed with sister brand Jaguar, is an impressive technological feat delivering high performance and efficiency.

NEW ENGINE: The Range Rover Sport is due out in September and will be available with a 3.0-litre V6 diesel engine option

Its output is 29 per cent up and the pulling power is 12 per cent better than the old 4.2-litre engine, yet CO2 emissions and fuel consumption are improved by 5.6 per cent and 6.2 per cent respectively.

It is available only in flagship Autobiography trim, though at £75,695 – prices for the diesel Vogue entry model start at £64,695.

The RR line-up will see another new engine in September when the 2010 Range Rover Sport arrives featuring another joint venture with Jaguar – a stunning 3.0-litre V6 diesel option already seen on the Jag XF.

It will give the 'junior RR' diesel model a staggering 36 per cent more pulling power, or torque, and consequent savings on fuel and emissions.

It shows that while Land Rover is seen as a symbol of the bad old days in motoring – highlighted when Greenpeace picketed the Midlands factory – it is using its technological muscle to re-invent its products.

As a short-term fix it became an industry leader in carbon offsetting to address climate change/global warming and its smallest model, the Freelander, is now available with 'Stop-Start' technology to save fuel in town centre traffic.

But LR's future rests on a £400 million project to build a car based on the LRX 'mini Land Rover' concept car that wowed several industry shows and even secured a modest £27 million development grant from the Government.

The design brief is "Range Rover levels of quality, drivability and breadth of performance in a more compact, more sustainable, package" and do not rule out a hybrid powertrain; Toyota proved the viability and demand with a second generation RX petrol-electric 4x4 launched recently and LR will be keen to follow.

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Hats of to Lexus croptop Page 71

Peugeot 207 style endures Pages 74-75

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USED CARS

AGILA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
08	58	Agila Club Auto	1.2	5	Moroccan blue	2,800	8,995

ASTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
05	55	Astra Life Estate CDTi	1.3	5	Ultra blue	37,750	5,995
06	06	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Rubens red	22,021	8,195
06	06	Astra Design Estate	1.6	5	Pannacotta	34950	7195
06	06	Astra Club	1.4	5	Silver lightening	37,500	6,995
06	56	Astra Elite CDTi	1.9	5	Ultra blue	37,950	8,995
06	56	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Star silver	39,340	7,495
07	06	Astra Club	1.4	5	Silver lightening	37,180	6,995
07	07	Astra Design Sports hatch	1.6	3	Power red	26,340	8,995
07	57	Astra Club CDTi Est	1.3D	5	Panacotta	8,275	8,995
08	08	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Black sapphire	15,890	9,995
08	08	Astra Breeze Sports hatch	1.4	3	Star silver	2,110	9,495
08	58	Astra Sxi	1.6	5	Green spirit	3,725	11,495
08	58	Astra Club CDTi Estate	1.7D	5	Technical grey	14,450	10,995
08	58	Astra Sri Sports hatch	1.6	3	Silver lightening	6,650	10,995
08	58	Astra Exclusiv T/T	1.8	2	Panacotta	12690	14995
08	58	Astra Breeze Sports hatch	1.4	3	Black sapphire	3,100	10,795

CORSA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
05	05	Corsa Design	1.4	5	Star silver	29,300	5,395
07	07	New Corsa Sxi	1.4	3	Flame red	30,750	7,995
08	08	New Corsa Breeze CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver	5,770	8,895
08	58	New Corsa Sxi CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver	4,200	9,995
08	58	New Corsa Sxi A/c	1.2	3	Silver lightening	3,675	9,295
08	58	New Corsa Club CDTi	1.3D	5	Star silver	3,325	9,995
08	58	New Corsa Breeze CDTi	1.3D	3	Star silver	4,380	9,995
08	58	New Corsa Design CDTi	1.3D	3	Metro blue	6,100	9,995

MERIVA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
08	58	Meriva CDTi Breeze Plus	1.3	5	Black sapphire	10,930	11495
08	58	Meriva Life	1.4	5	Air blue	3,720	8,995

VECTRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
02	52*	Vectra Sxi	1.8	5	Star silver	66,000	2,995
06	06	Vectra Design Est	1.8	5	Star silver	38,000	7,495

ZAFIRA

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
05	05	Zafira Life	1.8	5	Moonland	40,350	5,495
06	06	Zafira Club Auto	2.2	5	Star silver	37,280	7,495
08	58	Zafira Breeze CDTi Plus	1.9D	5	Metro blue	12,600	13995

DUE SOON

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
07	57	Astra VXR	2.0	3	Power red	16,500	13,995
08	57	Astra Sxi Sports hatch	1.6	3	Black sapphire	8,000	9,995
08	08	Astra Sxi Sports hatch (Ex pack)	1.6	3	Ultra blue	9,000	10,995

COMPANY OWNED VEHICLES - CARS

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Dr	Colour	M/age	£
08	58	Agila Design	1.2	5	Steel silver		8,995
08	58	Agila Design	1.2	5	Moroccan blue		8995
08	58	Agila Club A/c CDTi	1.3D	5	Steel silver		9995
08	58	Agila Club	1.2	5	Moroccan blue		8595
08	58	Agila Club A/c	1.2	5	Steel Silver		8795
08	58	Corsa Sxi A/c	1.4	5	Silver lightening		9695
08	58	Corsa Club Auto	1.4	5	Ultra blue		9995
08	58	Corsa Design	1.2	3	Black sapphire		9245
08	58	Vectra Exclusiv CDTi (150ps)	1.9D	5	Panacotta		10995
08	58	Vectra Exclusive CDTi (150ps)	1.9D	5	Black sapphire		10995

SALE SALE SALE COMMERCIAL VEHICLES* SALE SALE SALE

ASTRAVAN

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Colour	M/age	WAS	NOW
08	08	Astravan	1.7CDTI Club Plylined	White	7,000	£8,995	£7,995

CORSAVAN

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Colour	M/age	WAS	NOW
08	08	Corsavan	1.3CDTI Sportive, CDTi	Star silver	10,550	£7995	£6,995

COMBO

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Colour	M/age	WAS	NOW
07	07	Combo	1.3CDTi Crew van, PAS	White	8,700	£7,995	£7,495
08	08	Combo	1.3CDTi Air con	Silver	1,218	£7,995	£6,995
08	08	Combo	1.3CDTi Plylined, Side Dr	White	19,500	£6995	£5,995
08	08	Combo	1.3CDTi Ply lined, Side Dr	White	4,250	£7,995	£6,795

MOVANO

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Colour	M/age	WAS	NOW
06	56	Movano	2.5 CDTi LWB 100bhp	Silver	19,700	£9,995	£8,995
07	57	Movano	2.50CDTi Long wheel base	White	10,300	£12,995	£10,995
08	08	Movano	2.5CDTI MWB, Plylined	White	11,050	£11,995	£10,495
08	08	Movano	2.5CDTI LWB, Bulkhead	White	6,460	£13,995	£11,995
08	58	Movano	2.5CDTI MWB H/R	White	14,050	£11,995	£10,995

VIVARO

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Colour	M/age	WAS	NOW
05	55	Vivaro	1.9CDTI Long wheel base	Red	57,500	£8,995	£7,995
06	06	Vivaro	1.9D Short wheel base	White	51,000	£6,495	£6,245
07	57	Vivaro	2.0 CDTi Short wheel base	White	12,100	£9,495	£7,995
08	08	Vivaro	2.0 CDTI LWB, 115bhp	White	5,050	£10,995	£9,295
08	08	Vivaro	2.0CDTI Plylined, SWB	White	16,050	£9,795	£8,495
08	08	Vivaro	2.5CDTI Sportive, Plylined	Star silver	3,190	£15,995	£13,995
08	08	Vivaro	2.0CDTi Plylined, SWB	White	16,650	£9,795	£8,495
08	08	Vivaro	2.0CDTi Plylined, SWB	White	3,770	£9,995	£8,795
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI Sportive, 115bhp	Star silver	5,925	£13,995	£12,995

PRE-REG VEHICLES

Year	Reg	Model	Eng	Colour	M/age	WAS	NOW
08	58	Corsavan	1.3 CDTi CD Player	White	Delivery	£6,995	£6,745
08	08	Vivaro	2.0CDTi SWB, 90BHP	White	Delivery	£10,295	£9,995
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI Sportive,	Silver	Delivery	£13,995	£13,495
08	58	Vivaro	2.0CDTI SWB, Bulkhead	Ink Blue	Delivery	£11,995	£10,995

*All Commercial Vehicle prices exclude VAT at 15%

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08 58 FORD FUSION 1-6 ZETEC PLUS BLUE METALLIC 2000 MILES...£10495
08 58 FOCUS 1-6 TITANIUM AUTO PAS 5 DR ALLOYS AIR /CON 658MILES...£13995
08 58 PEUGEOT 107 2-TRONIC 3DR AUTO PAS RED 1400 MILES...£7995
08 58 ASTRA 1-8 SRi SPORT COUPE AUTO PAS AIR/C SILVER 1600 MILES ...£12995
08 58 ASTRA 1-8 ELITE AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DOOR STAR SILVER 600 MILES ...£12995
08 58 NEW CORSA 1-2 CLUB AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DR ICE BLUE 4000 MILES ...£8995
08 58 ASTRA 1-8 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DOOR BLACK 4000 MILES...£8995
08 58 NEW A CLASS 150 CLASSIC SE AUTO PAS 5DR BLUE 400 MILES...£12995
08 58 NEW MODEL MERIVA 1-6 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C SILVER 500 MILES ...£9995
08 58 KANGOO 1-6 AUTHENTIQUE AUTO PAS INTENSE BLUE 400 MILES ...£8995
08 58 CHEVROLET AVEO LT AUTO PAS AIR/C SILVER GREY 4000 MILES ...£7995
08 58 CHEVROLET AVEO LT AUTO PAS AIR/C TURQUOISE 1900 MILES ...£7995
08 58 SUZUKI SX4 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR/C ALLOYS BLUE 1800 MILES...£8995
08 58 NISSAN NOTE TEKNA 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR CAFFEE 6000 MILES...£10995
08 58 NISSAN NOTE ACENTA 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 1800 MILES...£9995
08 58 NISSAN NOTE ACENTA 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 3000 MILES...£9995
08 58 RENAULT CLIO 1-6 EXPRESSION 3DR AUTO PAS 750 MILES...£8995
08 58 VAUXHALL AGILA 1-2 DESIGN 5 DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 4000M ...£9495
08 58 TOYOTA YARIS T3 AUTO PAS AIR/C 5 DR CARLO BLUE 6000 MILES...£9995
08 08 SCENIC GRAND DYNAMIQUE 2-0 AUTO PAS AIR/C BLACK 2000MILES ...£11995
08 08 NEW ZAFIRA 1-8 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C TURQUOISE 4000 MILES...£9995
08 08 MICRA ACCENTA PLUS 5 DOOR AUTO BLUE PAS AIR/C 2000 MILES ...£8995
08 08 MICRA ACCENTA PLUS 5 DOOR AUTO BLACK PAS AIR/C 1900 MILES...£8995
08 08 FOCUS 1-6 TITANIUM AUTO PAS 5 DR ESTATE SILVER 4000MILES ...£12995
08 08 ASTRA 1-8 CLUB AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DOOR STAR BLACK 6000 MILES...£8495
08 08 ASTRA 1-8 LIFE AUTO PAS AIR/C 5DOOR PANNACTTA 2000 MILES...£8495
08 08 HONDA JAZZ 1-4 SE AUTO PAS AIR/C MET GREY 1800 MILES...10995
08 57 RENAULT MEGANE 1-6 EXPRESSION 4DR AUTO GREY 9000 MILES ...£7495

COUPES & CONVERTIBLES

08 58 MICRA 1-6 CONVERTIBLE CC ACENTA AUTO PAS LATTE 2000 MILES...£11995
08 58 MICRA 1-6 CONVERTIBLE CC ACENTA AUTO PAS LATTE 4000 MILES...£11995
08 08 PEUGEOT 207 SPORT CC 1-6 AUTO CABRIOLET SILVER 2000MILES...£12495
08 08 MEGANE PRIVILEGE 1-6 CONVERT AUTO PAS BLACK 13000 MILES ...£13995
08 08 MEGANE DYNAMIC 1-6 CONVERT AUTO PAS BLACK 12000 MILES ...£12995
06 56 HYUNDAI 2-0 COUPE SE 3DR AUTO PAS AIR SILVER 7000 MILES ...£8995
06 56 MICRA CONVERTIBLE SPORT AUTO AIR/C BLADE SILVER 16000MILES...£9995
06 06 MICRA CONVERTIBLE ESSENZA AUTO AIR/C BLACK 11000MILES ...£8995
05 55 MEGANE DYNAMIQUE1-6 CONVERTIBLE AUTO GOLD 13000 MILES...£8495
05 55 MERCEDES 200 CLK KOMPRESSOR AUTO SILVER 15000 MILES...£15995

FUSION & FIESTA

07 57 FUSION ZETEC 1-6 PLUS AUTO PAS AIR ALLOYS SEA GREY 5000 MILES ..£8995
07 07 FUSION ZETEC 1-6 ZETEC CLIMATE AUTO PAS AIR GREEN 4000 MILES ...£8495
06 56 FUSION 16 CLIMATE ZETEC AUTO PAS ALLOYS TONIC 10000MILES ...£6995
06 06 FIESTA ZETEC 1-4 CLIMATE AUTO PASAIR/C BLUE 13000 MILES...£6995
06 06 FUSION 14 CLIMATE AUTO PAS ALLOYS 5 DR AMETHYST 15000MILES ...£6995
06 06 FIESTA STYLE 1-6 CLIMATE AUTO PASAIR/C BLUE ONLY 50 MILES...£7995

FORD FOCUS & MONDEO

07 57 FOCUS 1-6 STYLE AUTO PAS AIR/C AQUARIUS BLUE 6000 MILES...£8995
07 57 FOCUS 1-6 STYLE AUTO PAS AIR/C MOONDUST SILVER 7000 MILES...£8995
07 57 FOCUS 1-6 ZETEC 5DRAUTO PAS AIR/CALLOYS BLACK 10000 MILES ...£8995
07 57 FOCUS 16 ZETEC 3DRAUTO PAS AIR/C ALLOYS SEA GREY 13000 MILES ..£8995
06 56 MONDEO 2-0 TITANIUM AUTO PAS 5DR GREY MET 2000 MILES ...£9995
06 56 FORD FOCUS GHIA AUTO PAS 5DR AIR/C TANGO RED 9000 MILES...£7995
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VISA Electron

FIRST GEAR

Compiled by Steve Loader

White-van man free to go green

YOU know road users are getting the eco message when van models start to get leaner, greener and meaner.

Whether the proverbial white-van man will like it remains to be seen, but van operators can now buy a Ford Transit – the nation's favourite panel pan – with the ECOnetic package applied to the most fuel-efficient low emission versions of big-selling Fords.

Priced from £18,095 and based on the popular front-driven Transit 280 short wheelbase model, it costs just £290 more than the base Transit version yet averages nearly 40mpg. This is likely to save hard-pressed operators 10 per cent on fuel, while showing their environmental awareness.

However, its modest price does highlight the much greater premium that consumers have to pay for Ford's ECOnetic car models against conventional counterparts.

VW challenges Golf GTI with new Golf

VOLKSWAGEN has just launched what is probably the fiercest rival to its GTI hot hatch icon.

It's another Golf, but a performance diesel GTD version (from £21,850) that highlights how diesel cars have overtaken petrol in the new car market.

The three and five-door newcomer's smooth 170PS (168bhp) 2.0-litre turbodiesel can take the GTD to 62mph in 8.1 seconds.

Though shy of the GTI's 6.9 seconds, shrewd private buyers and tax-conscious company car user choosers will note the trade-off: CO2 emissions of just 139g/km (£120/year road tax) and potential average fuel consumption of 53mpg.

This compares with the GTI's 170g/km (£175) and 38.7mpg and slightly higher starting price of £22,415.

As with the GTI, VW is also offering the GTD with its impressive six-speed twin-clutch DSG automatic gearbox, which mirrors fuel consumption of a manual equivalent and can be driven in manual mode.

The diesel flier looks lower and meaner than a standard Golf, wears a GTI bumper and honeycomb grille framed by chrome fins and has unique 17-inch 'Seattle Black' alloys and distinctive grey, white and black tartan upholstery.

What will 007 think?

ASTON Martin has glimpsed an eco future and may now develop a luxury city car with motor giant Toyota.

The British supercar brand – famous for supplying 007's beefy coupes in the James Bond movies – is developing its Cygnet concept based on Toyota's impressive IQ baby car.

Using the IQ's compactness, economy and Euro NCAP five-star safety rating – no mean feat considering the scale of that car, launched earlier this year – AM can apply its luxury craftsmanship and comfort to a completely new segment of the market.

Company chief Dr Ulrich Bez said: "Now is the right time for Aston Martin to take this first bold step to embark on this special project."

Don't expect Bond to take the same step with you though.

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by STEVELOADER

Summer sun cues new Lexus croptop

TIMED to perfection as we enjoy our brightest summer in years, Lexus launches a long-awaited opentop version of the IS compact executive model this month.

Just as the saloon has become a formidable and keenly-priced rival to the sector-leading BMW 3-Series, so the IS 250C attacks the UK market's most aspirational opentop car – the 3-Series Convertible.

Like the Beemer, the croptop Lexus features an electric folding hardtop; Toyota's luxury arm says the format delivers better security, aerodynamics and refinement.

Strengthening

The usual flexing weakness of convertibles – highlighted by so called 'scuttle shake' – is less of a problem for folding hardtops in 'roof up' mode, but Lexus has installed under-floor cross-bracing and other body strengthening to ensure that the 250C exhibits near identical NVH (noise, vibration and harshness) characteristics to its saloon sister when driving 'top down'.

The three-part aluminium roof on the IS250C attaches behind a steeply raked windscreen, takes just 20 seconds to raise or lower at the touch of a button and looks good up or down.

A cheaper diesel option is surely on the cards, but power for now comes from a 204bhp 2.5-litre V6 engine with six-speed automatic transmission, priced from £34,500, which is competitive with its BMW equivalent.

However, even the current model 250C comes with a typically generous standard spec including 18-inch alloys, aluminium sports pedals, parking sensors, auto windscreen wipers, eight-speaker/six CD changer premium sound system with USB and aux-in sockets, Bluetooth, keyless entry and push-button start, cruise control, leather seats, electrically adjustable front seats and dual-zone climate control.

The car's auto transmission can be driven as a manual via the gearshift or steering wheel paddles, and Lexus claims that it delivers good driver feedback, thanks to faster downshift times than when in fully auto mode.

The car's performance is lively, especially considering all that extra bracing; it will hit 62mph in nine seconds and reach a 130mph maximum. It should also average around 30mpg, but the 219g/km of CO2 emissions places it in Band K (£215/year) for road tax.

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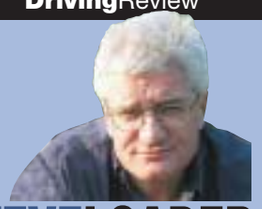
DrivingReview



by STEVELOADER

CHIEF DRIVING CORRESPONDENT
steve.loader@kosmedia.co.uk

Peugeot 207 1.6HDi 90 SPORT

Peugeot supermini's style stays constant

WHO invented the supermini?

The word itself was not coined until the mid-1980s, but there were small hatchbacks around before that.

The Italians probably take the credit: the Pininfarina design house penned the 'two doors and a tailgate' layout of the 1958 Austin A40, and Fiat created what was surely the supermini blueprint by launching the 127 in 1971.

It arrived with a boot, but was 'hatched' with a high-lift tailgate a year later and the familiar format had arrived – others rushed to follow.

Chic

But if the Italians picked up the ball, the French ran with it; the 1972 Renault 5 not only fitted the supermini mould but became a huge seller.

Arch rival Peugeot – better known for bigger cars – could not match the chic 'Cinq' until the 205 arrived in the 1980s, just in time to epitomise the new 'supermini' label.

Since then, Peugeot has hardly put a foot wrong with the type; the 205 stayed in production for 14 years, becoming the best-selling Peugeot of all time, only to see that record smashed by its successor, the 206.

That car was only partially replaced by the 207 tested here, continuing as a bargain basement alternative built in Slovakia and not scheduled for the chop until 2010, while the bigger 207 is one of a new breed of 'supersize superminis' including the Vauxhall Corsa and Renault Clio.

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It wears its size well though with sharp styling, a deep window line and huge sweeping headlamps.

It is a far bigger and more comfortable car inside than its predecessor, even if the raked back exacerbates slightly cramped rear seating and headroom.

That rear end also means a boot that is only par for the course in this sector, though the 60/40 split folding seats lay flat to create a van-like rear.

The 207's arrival in 2006 heralded a drive upmarket in cabin quality by the French marque – a trend adopted by many Western mainstream brands keen to stay ahead of ambitious Eastern rivals.

Enhanced

Those deep windows bring in plenty of light, enhanced on the test car by the optional Cielo panoramic roof – a no-brainer really at £400 extra.

All this light falls on quality materials and an excellent dashboard layout; extra audio controls are mounted on a wide stalk on the right of the steering column – obviously cheaper than mounting them on the wheel itself, yet makeing them easily accessible whatever steering lock is being applied.

The only black mark is a lack of stowage in front made worse by a pitifully small glovebox/cooler compartment disguised by an oversize lid. This small gripe is forgotten on the road; Peugeot's forte in the supermini era has been chassis designs that consistently deliver a good drive with decent ride comfort.

The 207 grips well and can be pressed hard, with well-controlled body roll on the corners.

Engine choice runs from the lively 1.4-litre entry petrol engine – a better way into 207 ownership than it appears – to mainstay 1.6-litre petrol variants and two similar capacity diesel line-ups.

Our high-level Sport spec test car had the 1.6-litre HDi diesel unit in mid-range 90bhp output, which is a fine all-rounder.

It can be a bit raucous when cold and put under pressure, but there is plenty of pulling power for safer exiting of junctions or overtaking, though the five-speed gearbox feels vague.

The 207 can look pricey, but has to be on any supermini shopping list and the current Verve special edition is a good deal from £12,040 with alloys and air con as standard.

DrivingStats

- Peugeot 207 1.6 HDi 90 Sport £14,495
- Range: £10,495-16,995
- Garage stats: 4.03m by 1.92m five-door hatchback
- Powertrain: 1,560cc/90bhp four-cylinder diesel engine driving front wheels through a five-speed manual gearbox
- Performance: top speed 113mph and 0-62mph in 12.9 seconds
- How green?: category-C (£35/year) road tax - 117g/km CO2 emissions
- Official fuel figures: combined 64.1mpg
- Euro NCAP safety rating (0-5 stars): *****
- Fuel tank: 50 litres/10.9gallons
- Insurance group: 5
- Warranty: three years/60,000 miles
- Rivals: Alfa Romeo MiTo, Chevrolet Aveo, Citroen C2/C3, Daihatsu Sirion, Fiat Grande Punto, Ford Fiesta, Honda Jazz, Hyundai i20, Kia Rio, Mazda2, Mitsubishi Colt, Nissan Micra, Perodua Myvi, Renault Clio, Seat Ibiza, Skoda Fabia, Subaru Justy, Suzuki Splash or Swift, Toyota Yaris, Vauxhall Agila or Corsa and VW Polo.

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FIESTA, 1.4 TDCI Zetec 5dr [Climate] - SPORT & TECH PACK, gl57khr, adjustable seats, air con, alloys, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, e/w, head restraints, immobiliser, passenger airbag, pas, remote locking, call les bellchambers 01474 537 537. insurance group:5, blue, 37496 miles, £7495, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

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FUSION, 1.4 TDCI ZETEC 5dr [Climate], sp57rhe, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests, adjustable steering column/wheel, central locking. insurance group:5, blue, 10566 miles, £9490, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

FUSION, 1.4 TDCI 2 5dr, gl53ezz, metallic vitro. abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, please call les bellchambers for further details: 0147477, green, 53390 miles, £4995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

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GALAXY, 2.0 TDCI ZETEC 5dr - AUTO [140] - P/A & PRIVACY, nb08luj, ford direct vehicle, privacy glass, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, folding rear seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, roof rails, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, traction control. insurance group:11, silver, 16875 miles, £15995, Gravesend, 01474 537111 (TRADE)

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KA, 1.3I STYLE [70] 3dr [Climate], oe07jxx, air conditioning, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, power assisted steering, remote locking, radio/cd, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel. insurance group:3, blue, 25637 miles, £5790, Crayford, 01322 621667 (TRADE)

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COLT, 1.1 CZ1 3dr, lv07ssz, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric windows, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:3, was, black, 25000 miles, £4495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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L200, Double Cab TD Trojan 4WD 113Bhp, gk07vzc, abs, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, leather seats, locking wheel nuts, immobiliser, power assisted steering. insurance group:14, grey, 36500 miles, £7995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

LANCER, 1.6 Elegance 4dr Auto, ly05rwf, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, leather seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:9, silver, 15250 miles, £4995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

LANCER, 1.8 GS3 4dr, gk08ycg, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, traction control. insurance group:8, 3yrs / 37500 mile free servicing with this car, saving_, silver, 9000 miles, £12995, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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307, 2.0 S 2dr Auto *Parking Sensors*, ad06sjv, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, air conditioning, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, sports seats, traction control. insurance group:11, black, 32000 miles, £9495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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CLIO, 1.4 16V Dynamique S 3dr Air Conditioning, gk55uca, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, head restraints, headlight washers, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, air conditioning. insurance group:4, black, 39400 miles, £6495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

LAGUNA, 2.0 16V Initiale 5dr, gl08fhb, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, central locking, climate control, computer, cruise control, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, front armrest, electrically adjustable seats, head restraints, headlight washers, folding rear seats, heated seats, leather seats, lumbar support, immobiliser, navigation system, park distance control, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, rear armrest, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests, traction control. insurance group:12, silver, 7000 miles, £12495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

MODUS, 1.6 Dynamique 5dr Auto, pn06ygl, abs, adjustable seats, adjustable steering column/wheel, alloy wheels, central locking, computer, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:5, red, 16270 miles, £6195, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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SWIFT, 1.5 GLX 5dr, gf06mrx, abs, adjustable seats, air conditioning, alloy wheels, driver airbag, electric mirrors, electric windows, foglights, head restraints, folding rear seats, immobiliser, passenger airbag, power assisted steering, remote locking, side airbags, radio/cd, rear headrests. insurance group:6, was, grey, 17000 miles, £6495, Sittingbourne, 01795 429802 (TRADE)

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'Withdraw this stealth tax on flying public'

THE Government has been urged to withdraw proposed changes to air passenger duty (APD) by the Board of Airline Representatives in the UK (Bar UK).

The changes, due to be implemented in November, and again in November, 2010, are, says Bar UK, a stealth tax on the travelling public which will prove harmful to UK business and act as a tariff barrier against airlines.

Chief executive Mike Carrivick said: "It's time the Government listened and understood the detrimental effects the new APD levels will impose. The new regime is effectively a tariff barrier that is aimed to hit the pockets of the flying public.

Choice

"Many will just not be able to afford to travel by air. Moreover, this won't just be UK residents doing business, going on holiday or visiting friends and family. This will also put a great number of visitors off travelling to the UK, especially from afar.

"The charges will simply make it too expensive to visit the UK compared with other parts of the world. The Government must recognise that in most cases the inbound leisure passenger has a choice of European airports.

"Bar UK calls for the Government to withdraw the proposed increases this year and next. We will continue to lobby them on this matter."

Brighton breezy

ACCOUNTANTS from Ashford pedalled their way to a four-figure sum for charity in the annual London to Brighton Bike Ride.

Nine volunteers from WK Finn-Kelsey saddled up and completed the 54-mile course. In doing so, they raised £1,000 for the British Heart Foundation.

Paul Nixon, associate manager, said: "We would like to express our gratitude to all our generous sponsors and look forward to taking part again in 2010."

ALL ABOARD: Julian Brazier, inset, wants assurances that Kent firms will be on an equal footing if they tender for Intercity Express contracts

A slice of the action

A TORY MP has called on the Transport Secretary to demand assurances that British firms will get a fair chance of earning a slice of a rail project worth £7.5 billion.

Julian Brazier, who represents Canterbury and Whitstable, made the call amid concerns local companies would not get a look in when it comes to bidding for work on a new train project.

He was spurred into action after being contacted by Amphenol, based in Whitstable.

The firm is a manufacturer of connectors and interconnect systems for the military and aerospace markets. Bosses wrote to the Mr Brazier voicing concerns over being given a fair chance to bid for sub-contracts in a £7.5bn railway contract. The Government's preferred bidder for the Intercity Express programme for the building of trains on the East Coast and Great Western main lines is Agility Trains, led by Japanese firm Hitachi.

The project will require 1,400 carriages. In his letter to the minister, Lord Adonis, Mr Brazier says: "I have been contacted by the managing director of Amphenol, an engineering company in my constituency.

"What concerns the management of Amphenol is just how many of these [carriages] will be built in Britain. I am told no decision has been made, but it is clear that should the work be carried out in Japan – which is not unlikely – then the opportunity for companies like Amphenol to bid for work for which they are ideally suited will be greatly restricted.

"The European Commission has already highlighted the difficulties of entry for non-Japanese companies in the Japanese market.

"I would be grateful if you could let me know what is being done to ensure British companies will benefit from this contract, and what is being done to open up the Japanese rail market."

He also calls on the minister to specify the nationalities the other constituent companies in the Agility consortium, and if an amount in terms of percentage or value for contracts being awarded to UK can be clarified.

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Super-fast future is making all the right connections

ASHFORD'S dash towards a future boasting top quality internet credentials shows no sign of slowing after super-fast online services were rolled out across the town.

And it is hoped the continuing rise in broadband speeds will further establish the town as the place to do business for firms which demand the fastest and most future-proof services.

By **JAMES BENJAMIN**
editorial@kosmedia.co.uk

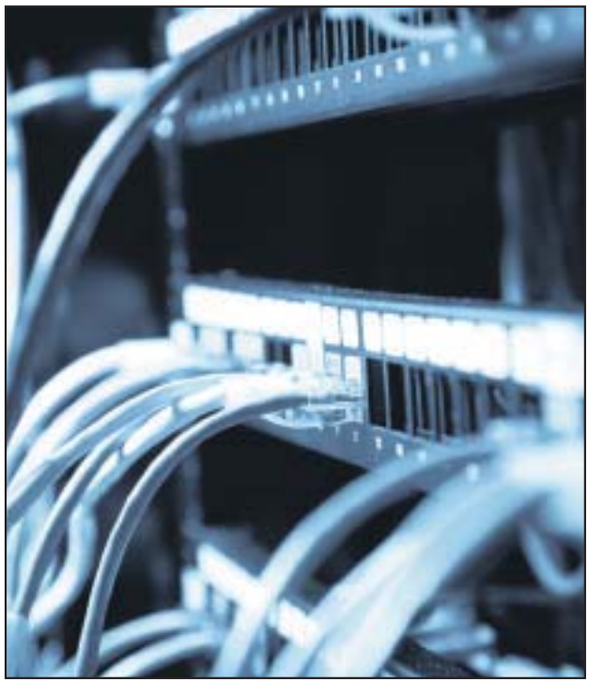
The latest development has seen Virgin Media expand its pioneering 2007 trials to start its 50Mb service.

Homes can now get a super-speedy fibre-optic broadband service nearly nine times faster than the average UK headline broadband speed.

Assuming users can actually get the speeds advertised – and users across a variety of networks have long complained the actual speeds achieve rarely match those advertised – 50Mb will allow an album to be downloaded in MP3 format in a 11 seconds and a television show in one minute.

Jon James, executive director of broadband at Virgin Media, said: "We're delighted to launch our new 50Mb service in Ashford. The service will transform the online experience for individuals and families alike."

The company is now trialling a whopping 200Mb connection in Ashford that could revolutionise the way people use the internet.



MODERN TIMES: Ashford's 50Mb broadband is being expanded

Small but perfectly informed

THE University of Kent has helped more than 50 local businesses boost their performance. The university's Centre for Employment, Competitiveness and Growth (CECG) assisted dozens of firms through a one-day workshop on leadership for growth and performance.

The workshop was held at Kent Business School on the Canterbury campus and included representatives from the Federation of Small Businesses, Thanet and East Kent Chamber of Commerce, and the Manufacturing Advisory Service South East, as well as owners and managers of small and medium-sized firms.

The workshop was funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and was part of the Promoting Sustainable Performance project.

CEGC director Dr Mark Gilman said: "Ongoing engagement between businesses and the higher education sector is of paramount importance. Knowledge needs to be transferred and fostered, especially in these tough times."

Simon Raby, a research associate at the centre and one of the organisers, said: "Research highlights that the majority of businesses, even prior to recessionary pressures, are not achieving their aspirations for growth.

"Through this research, the businesses informed us of the key challenges facing them, which were subsequently translated into a practical improvement programme."

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Mine host offers keys to success

AN AWARD-winning pub manager has offered top tips to those wanting to make their mark in the hospitality industry.

David Fournillier, who runs the 17th century Singleton Barn in Ashford, was named Shepherd Neame's manager of the year just 12 months after taking on the post.

The 43-year-old says there are several keys to success, but none more important than the old adage of giving people what they want.

He said: "It's important to be proactive with your customers. Running this kind of business is about people more than anything else. You can't sit back and wait for them to come to you."

The Trinidad-born businessman recommends forming bonds with local groups and organisations as a way of ensuring long-term trade.

He said: "You have to go out and meet people, write to individuals and groups, tell them what you are about and what you can do for them.

"You have to develop ongoing relationships within the community, with Rotary clubs, societies and charities. Ultimately, we help them and they help us."

Mr Fournillier also suggested introducing varied menus to attract a mixed clientele, while working with charity organisers provides long-term benefits.

TOP TIPS: Sheps' manager of the year, David Fournillier

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Woolies has relaunched as a purely online venture

Cleaning up the mess as retail circus leaves town

EXCLUSIVE

By RACHEL MCATHY
rachel.mcathy@kosmedia.co.uk

WHILE credit crunch casualty Woolworths enjoys its online relaunch, town centre officials across Kent have expressed anger at the chaos left behind.

Six months after the high street brand went bust, many of the larger stores in the county remain empty. This has left gaping holes in some of the most prestigious areas of Kent's town centres, and made managers furious.

Bill Moss, Maidstone's town centre manager said: "We were appalled at the way the building was left. They just upped and went, leaving us with a big mess. There are rows and rows of empty shelving and posters which have been ripped off the walls."

Despite trying for weeks to communicate with the administrators, Deloitte, there has been no response, Mr Moss said.

"We've been trying to talk to them about making some use of at least the front windows, but we get nowhere.

"There has been interest from companies, but to my knowledge no-one has secured the premises. It is one of the major stores in town and a key location. We are trying to decide what to do."

In east Kent, some former Woolworths stores have secured new owners. In Whitstable and Herne Bay, budget supermarket Iceland is preparing to move in, although the outlets have not opened yet, leading to growing impatience in the coastal towns.

Dawn Hudd, head of economic development and tourism at Canterbury council, said the city's St George's Street store was also left in a sorry state.

'We were appalled at the way the building was left. They just upped and went, leaving us a big mess'

"It does look quite messy. There's rubbish inside and it doesn't look good," she said. "We are keen to get it occupied, but getting the right tenant takes a lot of time."

She also said working with the administrators had proved difficult: "It's hard to get hold of them. They're looking to maximise their profit and get the best deal.

"It's likely they are holding out for a buyer for all the major stores, which makes it slightly difficult."

She added: "If we owned the lease we'd have done something about it, because we are concerned."

Unlike in some other areas, Canterbury council owns the freehold, but not the lease for the building.

Ms Hudd said the council was considering a range of options over how to use the store, with the possibility of splitting it into separate units. In this economic climate she doubts they would be able to get a single retailer to take over the entire store.

John Barber, the town centre manager for Folkestone, said the arrival of a new Wilkinsons store opposite has softened the blow.

"The state of our Woolworths isn't too bad – it's just empty windows and an empty store," he said.

"We had a good relationship with the

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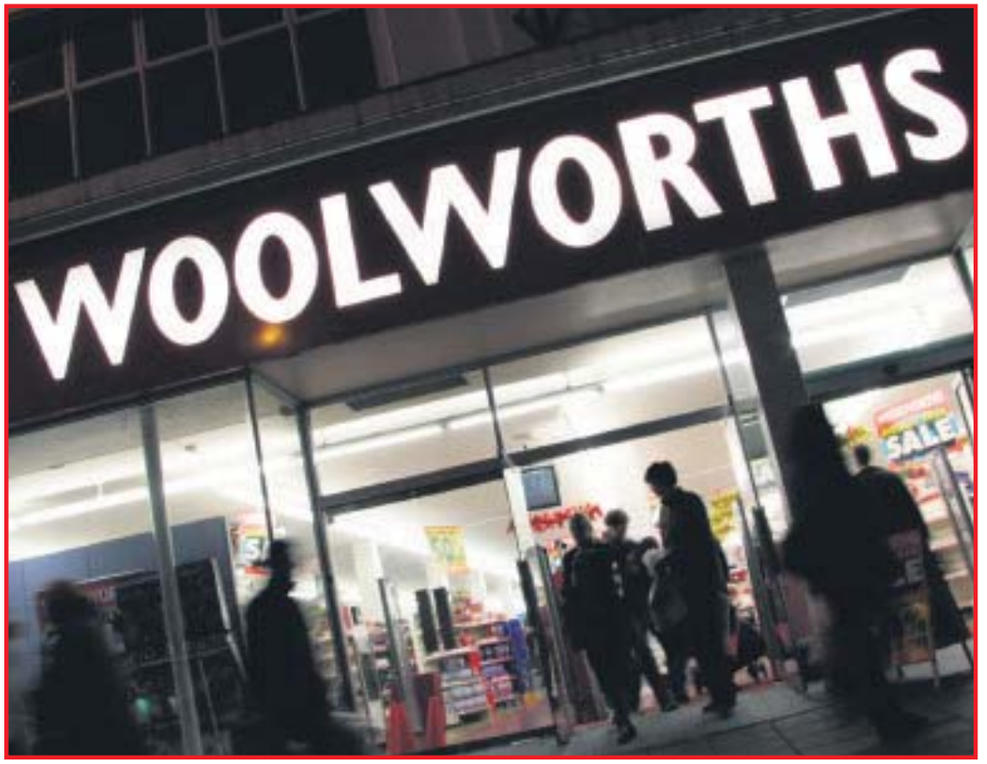


manager of the old store, which has made things better for us. We are hanging on in there and many former Woolworths customers are now using Wilkinsons."

Mr Barber said a mooted move to the premises by budget retailer Primark was in the "very distant background".

In response to the claims about messy premises and poor communication, Deloitte refused to comment on individual stores.

However, it did say staff spent a three or four-day period clearing the shops at the end of the closing down sales. But town centre managers say Woolworths staff facing unemployment were unlikely to be in the mood to do a thorough job.

Deloitte said any queries regarding empty premises should be emailed to woolworthsproperties@deloitte.co.uk.

A Deloitte official said: "We have been going through a process of finding buyers for empty stores."

They also blamed piles of unread post for any "unsightly" appearances in stores.

The new Woolworths online store, owned by Shop Direct, sells children's wear, including some of the Ladybird range, toys, entertainment and party products.

Sticking with tradition, they also offer the store's famous pick'n'mix, with a minimum selection of 100g – costing 99p.

The bags of candy proved their popularity earlier this year, after the last ever bag from a Woolworths store sold on eBay for £14,500.

'End uncertainty on energy plans'

FIRMS are choosing not to invest in new developments which would benefit the environment because of uncertainty over the future of planning policy.

That is the claim of the Confederation of British Industry (CBI), with regional director Malcolm Hyde claiming huge investment is needed to improve the energy system and reduce carbon emissions.

Mr Hyde said: "Massive private sector investment will be required to get our energy system up to scratch and cut carbon emissions, but delays in implementing the Planning Act are threatening the future of critical energy projects.

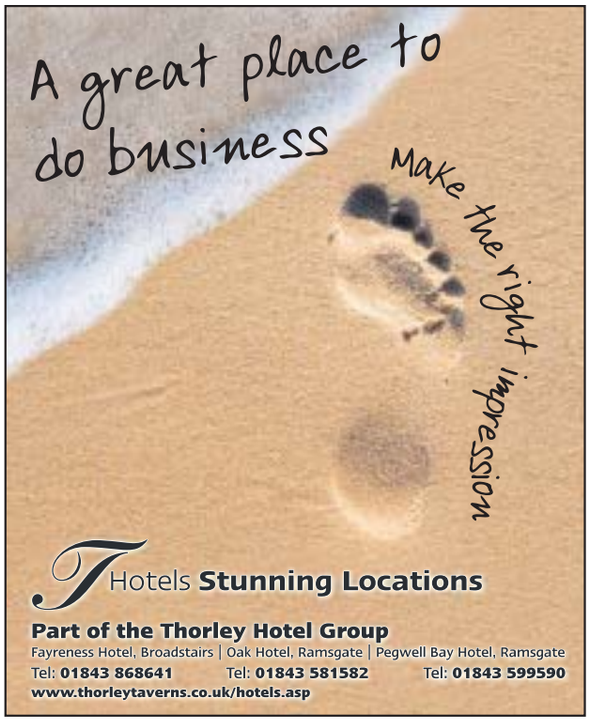
"Businesses are not going to commit to building the wind, nuclear and clean-coal power stations that will be needed to keep the lights on if they think the goalposts are going to get shifted further down the line."

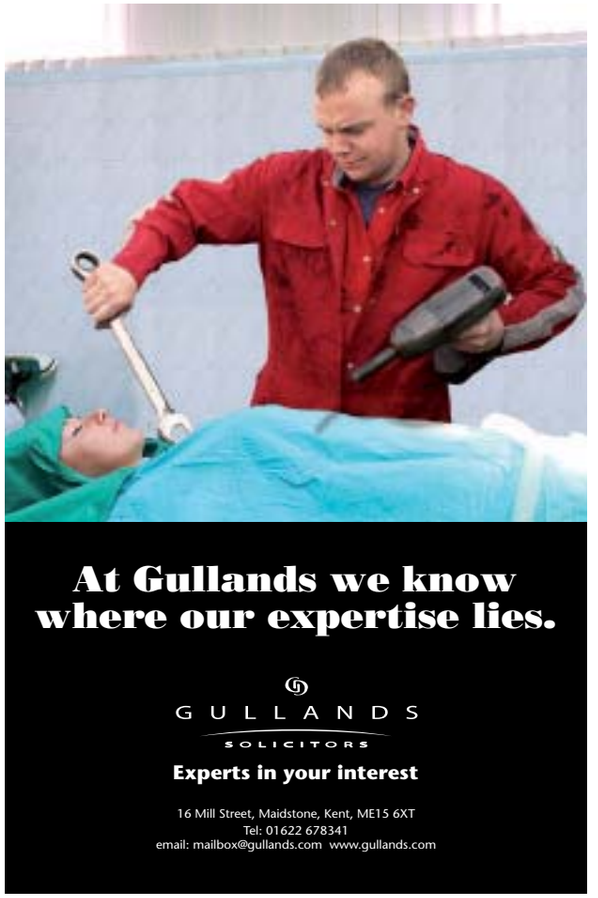
The CBI is calling on the Government to bring forward the publication of the long-awaited national policy statements.

Director general Richard Lambert says little progress has been made since the turn of the year, which is stopping firms from investing in new low-carbon energy.

The CBI has suggested several actions that need to be taken by government and business during the next six months to get the UK back on track to build a low-carbon economy and help consumers make low-carbon choices.

Among the recommendations are introducing loans and incentives to make energy efficient improvements in homes and offices more attractive.





By **LIZ RULE**
Pharon Independent Financial Advisers Ltd

THE Financial Services Authority has just published the latest in a round of consultations on how the financial services industry should deliver advice and products.

The Retail Distribution Review will be the biggest change to sweep the industry for years. The changes are set to provide the clarity surrounding charges and commissions that have been needed for some time.

Instead of seeing a financial adviser, receiving a recommendation and then finding out how much commission the adviser has been paid, the changes require the adviser to tell the customer up front how much the advice will cost, and require the customer to decide whether they pay that amount as a fee, or whether they have the charge deducted on a pound-for-pound basis from their policy.

This should reinspire confidence in an industry dogged for years by misselling scandals. And those who use independent advisers will feel confident there is no commission bias, as it will have been completely removed. Consumer confidence will also be bolstered as the rules will require all financial advisers to have higher qualifications than at present. So, on the whole, this legislation is welcomed. The one aspect that indicates some detriment is highlighted in the document where the FSA acknowledges cross-subsidies will be removed with the abolition of commission.

This means the cost of financial advice is going to increase for smaller investors, whereas for larger investors the costs will reduce. This seems inevitable, but is definitely an unwanted side effect.

'UK public sector too slow to react'

UK PUBLIC sector organisations appear much slower than their counterparts in other developed countries in planning the radical changes needed in order to cope with the looming public sector recession, a global KPMG survey shows, ***writes James Benjamin.***

The survey among 124 senior civil servants in six countries reveals that only 15 per cent of British public sector bodies are planning to change their strategy for next year, compared with 70 per cent of respondents from the USA and 60 per cent from Australia.

According to the survey, the British are also least likely to rethink their organisation's overall long-term strategy, only 35 per cent of British respondents plan to do so, compared with 71 per cent in the Netherlands or 70 per cent in the USA.

Alan Downey, head of public sector at KPMG, said: "The results show there appears to be complacency within the UK public sector as to the scale of problem. They are even more shocking because the financial problems in the UK are predicted to be much more severe than in some of the other countries surveyed. Projected Government deficits in the UK are much higher than in other countries and borrowing more or increasing taxes just won't be an option.

"The UK public sector is now faced with an important choice. Plan now for major changes and cost savings, in order to protect the quality of essential public services, or risk drifting unprepared into the looming public sector recession, which will lead to arbitrary cuts in services."

The survey also shows many of the UK public sector bodies, which are planning changes, focus on traditional ways to save money such as efficiency programmes and reducing procurement costs (85 per cent).

Respondents from other countries, most notably the USA and Canada, are more likely to think of radical measures, such as changing business models and cutting the services they offer. Half of those surveyed are also looking for new ways to increase their budget such as introducing charging for certain services, with Americans and British most likely to do so (USA 65 per cent, UK 60 per cent).

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RT: FIXED **R%:** 4.19% **L:** 70% **U:** 02/10/2011 **OD:** £1,255

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Why there's Gold in them there thrills

Chief executive of Ann Summers and Knickerbox, **Jacqueline Gold**, is the woman who brough sex to the high street. She started as a wages clerk at Ann Summers, which her father – Birmingham City FC owner David Gold – bought as a four-store chain.

A chance visit to a Tupperware party gave her the idea of selling sex toys and lingerie through party networks. She became chief executive in 1987 and transformed Ann Summers into a multi-million-pound company. Born and brought up in Kent, Gold has based the company in the county. Ann Summers now has a sales force of more than 7,500 party organisers, and more than 130 high street stores in the UK, Ireland and the Channel Islands, plus one in Spain. When Gold bought Knickerbox in 2000 it had losses of £5m. It is now one of the high street's most successful brands. She has been voted the second most powerful woman in retail by Retail Week; most inspirational businesswoman (Barclays), one of Britain's business icons (NatWest); and one of Britain's top businesswomen by publications including Cosmopolitan, Esquire, Woman and Good Housekeeping. One of the Daily Mail's 100 most influential women, she was also invited to Buckingham Palace for a celebration of Women in Business.

Ann Summers boss offers top tips for success

THE driving force behind high street brands Ann Summers and Knickerbox has outlined the three golden rules for anyone looking to start their own business.

With more than 8,500 people in Kent finding themselves redundant since October, many are looking to become self-sufficient and set up their own business.

But with such a brave step comes risks.

Now Jacqueline Gold – chief executive of Ann Summers and Knickerbox – has delivered her three tips on making a new venture a success.

Ms Gold, who grew up in Biggin Hill and has been named the most inspirational businesswoman in a survey by Barclays, transformed her companies into multi-million-pound concerns with massive brand presence and wide commercial appeal.

She says:

• Pick something you feel you will be good at as well as being passionate about. For example, if I was starting out again now, I would definitely play on my expertise in retail, lingerie and design.

• Research what your customers want and don't forget you're not your own client, so don't get swept up with enthusiasm for your own idea and forget the public.

• And, finally, be extra cautious in these difficult times and always consider what is in the best interest of the business.

Be realistic. Don't be fooled by turnover; the bottom line – in other words profit – is always your priority.

For those who are considering taking the plunge, support organisation Business Link is running a series of free workshops – including Foundations for Success. Designed to ensure participants are aware of all the key areas they need to understand before going in alone, it is hoped it will ensure their first tentative steps are done on a secure footing to provide the best chance of long-time survival.

Business Link adviser Tudor Price said: "It's clear from Jacqueline that starting a business is exciting, but there is a lot to learn. We can help you decide if it's the right option for you."

The Foundations for Success workshops take place in Maidstone on July 6, Tunbridge Wells on July 8, Canterbury July 10 and Folkestone July 13. For details see: www.businesslink.gov.uk/southeast/startup.

GOOD AS GOLD: Jacqueline is offering advice to would-be entrepreneurs

County's roads a map for past cycling glories

As the Tour de France began this weekend, **FRED ATKINS**, author of the book Tour de Kent, lists five of the county's landmarks the famous event has passed over the years.

Picture: ASHFORD WHEELERS

RUSH HOUR: Crowds watch the 2007 Le Tour through Tonbridge

ONE of cycling's unique attractions is that unlike, for example tennis, where only the smallest fraction of players ever gets to play on Centre Court, absolutely anyone can ride on the roads used by the world's best riders.

It is a sport that relies on and is defined by geography. Of its champions Lance Armstrong has ridden through Tunbridge Wells, Miguel Indurain through Goudhurst and Chris Boardman through High Halstow.

As a result the county is littered with landmarks, from the obvious – start and finish lines for Tour de France stages – to the obscure – a patch of tarmac at the bottom of Boxley Hill where someone wanted to erect a plaque.

1 CANTERBURY

KRISTIAN House's hometown staged the finish of stage one of the 2007 Tour de France. As such it attracts its fair share of modern day pilgrims, riding the race route.

The French can't get enough of the place they call 'Kontairbairee', but logistical reasons meant the stage finish had to be on a fairly anonymous stretch of Rheims Way and not in front of the cathedral.

It was here that Robbie McEwen stunned the field to win in 2007, and here that Bradley Wiggins raced as a junior.

2 GOUDHURST

GOUDHURST Hill was one of the most iconic places in the Kent Tour stage.

It may only have been rated a fourth category climb by the organisers, but it attracted a staggering number of fans from all over the world and looked more like an Alp, with crowds up to 12 deep in places and helicopters buzzing overhead.

The 'sprint' for King of the Mountains points didn't actually take place at the very top of the hill, but was instead held in front of the Star & Eagle pub. A club cyclist would do well to average 10mph on this hill. The pros managed 15-20mph.

3 BOXLEY HILL

IN 1997 the World Cup came to Kent. Sadly it was only the cycling World Cup and it only lasted for a day, but the race, known as the Rochester Classic, did attract a top-class field, including Britain's Olympic Champion Chris Boardman.

Home fans had high hopes of a Boardman win, but when the riders were jostling for position on the lower slopes of Boxley, he crashed, aggravating a back injury he'd suffered in the Tour de France.

Local enthusiasts were so stunned they asked for a plaque to be erected to commemorate the site. They got the Channel Tunnel rail link instead.

4 THANET WAY

YOU would have to question the sanity of anyone who would willingly cycle along the A229, but Graeme Obree, the man who built his 'old faithful' bike out of washing machine parts among other things, was never a prisoner of convention.

Time trialists like dual carriageways as, despite the obvious dangers, the superior road surfaces and the drag they get from the traffic allows them to post far quicker times than they would on country lanes.

Obree, who would later become the subject of the film 'Flying Scotsman' starring Johnny Lee Miller, broke the UK 50-mile record on the Thanet Way in the early 1990s and went on to break the World Hour record.

The Swanscombe section of the A2 used to be a favourite playground of time-trialists who valued speed before health, while until very recently Tour yellow-jersey wearer Sean Yates played dodge-the-juggernaut on the A21 course south of Tonbridge.

5 LUTON ARCHES

FRANKLY not the first place you'd choose for a leisure ride, nor one likely to become a tourist destination any time soon.

It did, however witness a sit-down protest during the 2006 Tour of Britain.

The stage began at Rochester Castle and was supposed to take a ceremonial tour of Chatham Dockyard.

Somebody took a wrong turn and it was the final straw for a number of riders who, after a series of incidents earlier in the race, spat out the collective dummy and had a half-hour break under the vista of a Medway railway bridge.

"It was a bonus for the people of Rochester," race official Tony Doyle, a former world champion, said. "They got the race for 50 minutes instead of 20."

Tour left Cavendish in tears

Picture: GETTY IMAGES

TALENT: Mark Cavendish

MARK Cavendish doesn't have great memories of Kent. When he was told he'd been beaten by Canterbury's Kristian House in the British Professional Road Race Championship last Sunday, his reaction was a mixture of incredulity and gracelessness.

It wasn't a surprise. Away from the heat of the race Cavendish can be eloquent and genial, but he is a notoriously ill-tempered interviewee in the immediate aftermath of a 40mph bunch sprint.

This is understandable. It isn't easy to keep your cool when you've just had other riders jam their elbows in your ribs and try to ram you into the crash barriers, only to be then asked "How do you feel?".

Cavendish is, however, very bad at losing – possibly because he's so good at winning.

Sir Chris Hoy may have got the knighthood, but at the age of 24, Cavendish is already arguably the greatest cyclist Britain has ever produced, having won four stages of the Tour de France last year and this spring's Milan-San Remo classic.

If these were the highpoints of a brief career to date, the low point was undoubtedly on July 8, 2007, at Farthing Common near Stanford, when his dreams of becoming the first British rider to win a stage of the Tour in the UK were shattered.

A year before Cavendish had finished second in a stage of the Tour of Britain from Rochester to Canterbury and he was determined to learn from a key error he made, taking the wrong route at a roundabout before the finish on Rheims Way. He was well-placed to challenge when disaster struck.

Moments earlier the Australian sprinter Robbie McEwen had fallen at Blindhouse Lane, Sellindge, apparently leaving the field clear.

Cavendish gave conflicting reports of what happened next, first saying he'd collided with a man, then telling the Guardian newspaper a woman was to blame.

"It was 25km from the finish and I was up at the front," he said.

"If I had been further back I would've been okay. The next thing I know I'm lying on the ground. I hit a woman. It's great that she wanted to watch, but people are not aware how the sport works over here."

What is known is that Cavendish was abandoned by his team-mates, unlike McEwen, who was towed back to the bunch.

To make matters worse his chain had come off, costing him further precious seconds.

Race officials threatened to disqualify him for riding too close to the team cars and without any support he tailed in several minutes behind McEwen, riding down Stone Street and into Canterbury in tears.

Asked later what would have happened had his colleague waited, Cavendish said: "Robbie McEwen got back on – and he won."

The identity of his assailant remains unknown and for all his successes since, Cavendish will have unfinished business to attend to if the Tour returns to Kent.

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Broken promises leave Shakey contemplating change of scene

EXCLUSIVE

By TOM HOWARD

Picture: STERILGARDA DUCATI

SADDLE SORE: Shane Byrne says his team is partly to blame for a disappointing season

SHANE Byrne has hit out at his Sterilgarda Ducati team for failing to deliver on promises when he signed to race for them in the World Superbike Championship.

The reigning British Superbike champion, from Sheppey, is the first person to admit his debut season in the world series has not gone to plan.

The 33-year-old has struggled for the majority of the season riding for Sterilgarda Ducati and only the last two rounds at Donington Park and Misano have seen Byrne on the pace.

He picked up four top-six finishes from the four races, including a second place at San Marino, which could so easily have turned into a win.

Despite a run of positive results, Byrne remains frustrated by his 2009 season so far, especially with fellow Brits Leon Haslam and Tom Sykes having a better time on the world stage.

He told Kent on Sunday: "To be honest, the recent results do not make up for the poor start to the season. I was promised a lot of things when we agreed the deal with the team and the move to World Superbikes, but it has not come off as I expected.

"In motorsport the machinery is so important – you only have to look at Jenson Button in Formula One and how well he is doing in a good car. It is the same for me.

"I am being beaten by Sykes and Haslam this season when last year I was beating them. It is frustrating because they are doing well this year – that should be me."

Although Byrne (10th in the standings) came agonisingly close to a first place in Misano, the racer feels he is no closer to achieving his first race win of the year.

He said: "I think the only way we will win is if conditions are in my favour and for me not to make any mistakes. It is not for the want of trying because I am giving it everything.

"The performance in the dry at Donington was genuine, which was nice."

Byrne has revealed his agent is already talking to various teams about securing a deal for next season.

Tennis protégé wins a place at famous Bollettieri school

A YOUNG tennis star from Kent has been awarded a place at the famous Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy after impressing the former coach of women's Wimbledon champions Venus and Serena Williams.

With the interest growing in the career of Britain's Laura Robson on display at Wimbledon this week, 10-year-old Mia Smith, from Tunbridge Wells, could be the next to follow in her path.

After being spotted at the age of five at the Jarrett Tennis School in the spa town, Smith has been catching the attention of the LTA and more recently the famous Nick Bollettieri Tennis Academy in America.

Following a three-month trip to the academy in March, she has been offered a scholarship place after impressing Bollettieri, the former coach of Andre Aggassi, Maria Sharapova and Boris Becker.

Smith's coach Adam Swan accompanied her on the trip with her family and he believes she can go a long way in the sport.

He said: "If she carries on the way she is, I am sure she will make a very tidy career out of the game. The determination in the way she plays and how she strikes the ball is amazing.

"I am glad Nick has seen what I have seen and he said to me that she has the best one-handed backhand he has ever seen at her level. There is no reason why she cannot follow in the footsteps of Laura Robson."

The move to America means her parents are looking at ways to raise the money to fund her tennis education at the academy.

Smith is in action at St John's Tennis Centre in Tunbridge Wells on July 12.

BIG HIT: Mia with Nick Bollettieri

Timeline

Kent on Sunday sport takes a look back at the county's sporting action of yesteryear

1909

100 YEARS AGO: THE quality of cricket umpiring at local level was raising heckles, with the lbw laws the biggest bone of contention.

One correspondent reported that while it was agreed good and bad umpires could be found everywhere, they could never be found when you were hit on the pads. The idea that there was a golden age of cricket when the umpire's decision was unquestioned is evidently a myth.

Knowledge of the laws of the game was openly questioned and in one case an incredulous batsman asked a Maidstone umpire why he had been given out, only to be told, "the law states a man is out if the ball hits him below the elbow".

Which is something to keep in mind the next time you watch an international with Rudi Koertzen or Daryl Harper in charge.

1959

50 YEARS AGO: VIEWERS of the BBC's recent Empire of Cricket season will have learned that the division between amateurs and professionals, based on class lines, was still rife five decades ago.

The annual Gentleman v Players fixture was imminent and David Sayer, the fast bowler who had made his debut for Kent while still at Maidstone Grammar School (and had to travel to Tunbridge Wells by bus, listening to fans talking about him before a gateman refused to believe he was a player) was selected.

Then the opening bowler at Oxford University, Sayer had already been honoured by a call from the MCC for their tour to Argentina.

Sayer should have had the chance to impress his future Kent captain Colin Cowdrey, but the great man was sidelined with a foot injury and doubtful for Kent's annual Blackheath fixture with Surrey.

1984

25 YEARS AGO: DEREK Underwood was the unlikely batting hero for Kent after an astonishing tie with Sussex at Hastings.

'Deadly' may have been a bowler of international repute, but he waited until he was 39-years-old before making his highest ever score in first-class cricket. Underwood made 111 from 250 balls including 14 fours, for his only ever century.

Kent made just 92 in the first innings and Sussex replied with 143 as a cluster of wickets fell.

Terry Alderman's unbeaten 52 helped Kent post 243 in the second innings and Sussex seemed to be coasting home until they lost their last four wickets for six runs. It was the first tie in the County Championship in a decade and Kent's first since 1950, v Hants at Southampton.

"When the day started my main concern was to stay there, it was just play and survive," Underwood said. "I was delighted when I passed my previous best score of 80, but wasn't until I reached the 90s that I thought if I could hang around a bit longer the century could be on."

Elsewhere, Simon Toms, 16, from Maidstone, brother of the future Maidstone and Whitstable manager Matt Toms, joined Tottenham Hotspur as a YTS player.

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Olympian Lewis pledges to give all our children a sporting chance

2012 can be the catalyst for healthier generation, says Denise

By DAVID PRITCHARD

AS AN eight-year-old girl Denise Lewis made a pledge to push herself in the hope of becoming an Olympic athlete after being transfixed by the Moscow Games.

It took two decades, but the sentiment drove her to become only the sixth British woman to win Olympic gold in athletics when she triumphed in the heptathlon in Sydney in 2000.

Four years on from retiring, Lewis has changed her focus to inspiring younger generations.

The 36-year-old was in Kent this week to hear similar pledges from schoolchildren as part of National School Sports Week.

She told Kent on Sunday the programme was not about finding talented youngsters to follow in her footsteps, but rather to increase the number of children regularly participating in sport.

"I kept coming back to my pledge even when things weren't going well", she said.

"I always kept saying to myself 'you've got to push all your personal boundaries'. That's always been how I've lived my life really and National School Sports Week is about doing just that. It's about putting sport back on the map and making sure kids are able to do as much sport as they physically can."

As a mother-of-three, Lewis is acutely aware of the difficulties some youngsters have in getting engaged with sport.

As part of a nationwide government initiative, almost 300 children who may struggle to get active regularly, met at Herne Bay High School to try alternative sports like lacrosse and handball.

Lewis admits it is tougher now than when she was growing up, but it is an issue she is passionate about changing.

She said: "I think kids want to be competitive and do something, but they're called by the games consoles, etc, all these different distractions. It's all about the kids having a go and making pledges to themselves.

"There was one girl whose pledge was to get her family to be more healthy at home. I think that's just fantastic, it's not about winning, it's about having a go."

One of the reasons for the big push towards greater participation is the London Olympics in three years' time. Seen as a once in a lifetime opportunity to inspire the younger generation and reverse the trend of childhood obesity, Lewis believes it's come at a crucial time.

"It's almost if we can't do it now we're never going to", she said. "I was eight when I was first captured by the Olympic spirit and I hope in that way 2012 will be that catalyst for a lot of kids participating and think 'I can be something'. Maybe not an Olympic champion, but something like massage therapy, a life in sport which is very rewarding.

"What Sydney did teach me is you don't know where your life is going to take you so why don't you do something and apply yourself into something you're passionate about and make the most of every opportunity you get, don't waste it."

SHAPING UP: Denise Lewis with schoolchildren as part of National School Sports Week

Daggers pulled as Benson deal leaves Stimson irate

Picture: GETTY IMAGES

GILLS TARGET MAN: Paul Benson

GILLINGHAM manager Mark Stimson has accused Dagenham & Redbridge of going back on their word in an effort to block a move for striker Paul Benson, ***writes David Pritchard***.

Stimson is keen on the 29-year-old striker, whose 22 goals last season included one superb strike against the Gills in December.

According to what the Gills boss has been told by the player's agent, Benson was promised that he could leave Victoria Road if his valuation could be met.

The Gills made a formal approach and matched the asking price last month, but the Daggers rejected it.

A national newspaper last weekend reported the move, but put a figure which Stimson claims was far higher than their actual bid.

"We have put a bid in for Benson which we were told by his representative the club would accept", he said. "The club refused it and then it went national mentioning some crazy figure of £150,000. We haven't got that kind of money.

"We're still interested in the kid, it's just a matter of his advisers now talking to the club and hopefully Dagenham, from what I'm led to believe, honour what they told the kid at the end of last season. If that's the case he would be coming to join us."

With only Simeon Jackson reaching double figures last season, recruiting at least one goalscorer is the priority for Stimson this summer.

Although Benson has never played higher than League Two, he has an impressive scoring record.

A late bloomer, he was still playing in the Essex Intermediate League as a 25-year-old, but 96 goals in two seasons for White Ensign caught the attention. Dagenham snapped him up and were rewarded with 60 goals in four seasons.

Stimson rates him highly: "He's a goalscorer, he gets all types of goals from outside the box, inside, he's keen as mustard and is someone I'd like to work with if possible."

Gillingham are also in the market for a centre-back and Stimson had his first look at a defender on trial when pre-season training began on Thursday.

The need for more defensive cover was made more pressing with Mark Bentley returning with a groin injury.

The versatile vice-captain will go for a scan today, but the club will not know how serious it is for a few days.

Picture: IGOR KUPCO

A NEW DEAL?: Backers appear to have been found for Invicta (in red)

Seasiders' future looking brighter

FOLKESTONE Invicta's appeal for new backers appears to have paid off after a new potential investor responded to the club's appeal for new sponsors.

The Seasiders' board were expected to take the club into administration this week after failing to find a replacement for their two main sponsors, whose deals ran out at the end of last season.

A deadline on Monday passed with no news, but shortly afterwards there was cause for renewed optimism.

Bob Dix, one of the club's three remaining directors, said: "We have somebody who's interested, a new person interested in getting involved at the club. It's very encouraging, it's all going all right but that's all I can really say at the moment."

The club need around £50,000 to replace the sponsorship deals and avoid going into administration, which would carry an automatic 10-point penalty next season.

ACTION MAN: Seamer Chris Whelan is out of contract at the end of the season
Picture: GETTY IMAGES

Whelan on radar as Kent look to strengthen squad

Worcester bowler making big impression

By GLENN PEARSON

KENT have indicated their interest in speaking to Worcestershire seamer Chris Whelan about joining the club next season.

The 23-year-old Liverpool-born medium-fast bowler is Worcestershire's leading wicket-taker this season with 19 scalps, and Kent have seen enough to put in a 28-day notice of approach to speak to him.

Worcester coach Steve Rhodes said this week that Kent have put in an approach, but Whelan's performances this season means he is likely to be offered a deal to stay at New Road.

Kent, however, will hope to persuade him to join them at St Lawrence next summer and coach Simon Willis told Kent on Sunday that he is not the only player the club are looking at for next season.

"He [Whelan] is a name that is out of contract at the end of the year, I can't deny that, but there are a lot of others as well.

"Last week I was asked about two other players, but at the moment the important thing is it's that time of year when you need to know who is available and who isn't. What we are doing is going through that process of approaching counties that have players out of contract and saying 'are you going to renew or are they available to talk to?'.

"Once we know what that list is, we can then see if there is anyone that can add value to our squad."

Two others believed to be on the Kent target list are 23-year-old Warwickshire fast bowler Naqaash Tahir and Leicestershire all-rounder Jim Allenby.

Tahir is a right-arm fast bowler who made his first-class debut in 2004, and this week claimed the wickets of Andrew Strauss, Andrew Flintoff and Matt Prior for his county as England played their final warm-up game ahead of the Ashes.

Allenby, 26, born in Western Australia but English qualified, is a hard-hitting all-rounder who regularly featured in Leicester's one-day and Twenty20 side before forcing his way into their championship side towards the end of the 2006 season.

Stevens' performances proving that he's just an all-round talent

By GLENN PEARSON

A TWENTY20 specialist, and regarded as Kent's best 'finisher' in limited-overs cricket, it's understandable that Darren Stevens struggled to answer whether promotion in the County Championship was more important than another finals day win.

"That's a tough one," he admitted. "I think the aim is to get back in Division One. We are a good side and shouldn't be in the second division. I would take promotion to Division One next year over Twenty20."

His performances in the Twenty20 Cup this season have helped Kent Spitfires top the South Division and earn a quarter-final tie at home to the Durham Dynamos.

Thankfully

Having 'finished' games off, most notably against Middlesex when he clubbed an unbeaten 59 from just 24 balls and a 42-ball 62 against Hampshire, the 30-year-old continues to do the role asked of him in Twenty20.

"Keysey [skipper Rob Key] asked me a couple of years ago to win games for us in the middle order and I have done that on many occasions and hopefully I will continue that," he said. "Nearly every time I have batted this year I have had different scenarios that I have had to approach and weighed them up as the game has gone on, and thankfully for myself and the side, it's come off. I have enjoyed the challenge of putting runs on the board or knocking them off.

Picture: ADY KERRY

IN FORM: Darren Stevens loves Twenty20

"Every T20 game there is a minimum of about 6,000 in the crowd and then you have big games at The Oval of 19,000 and then for the quarter-final I'm sure there will be a packed house at Canterbury. That's got to be the way forward hasn't it? You want the crowds to be in and every Twenty20 game is like being in a final with the crowd in, it's awesome and has really changed the game completely."

The former Leicestershire man, who joined the county at the end of the 2004 season, struggled for form last season, but has hit the ground running this summer with a more consistent approach in all forms, including a match-winning unbeaten 136 in the championship win against Essex at Chelmsford.

Practice

The big-hitting all-rounder puts his improved performances down to a spell in South Africa ahead of the county season.

He said: "I think I've had a better start this year than I've had since I joined the club. In my first year I had a good start and was consistent and I would say this summer I have been consistent in all forms. I have had a couple of big scores.

"Before the season I spent three months in Cape Town and came back with match practice behind me, so I've carried that into this season. I haven't been away before so maybe that's got a lot to do with it."

Picture: ADY KERRY

Denly showing his 'roar' ability

JOE Denly gave the England selectors a timely reminder of his ability as he hit form for the Lions in Australia's final warm-up match ahead of the Ashes.

The 23-year-old looked in good touch at New Road, Worcester, as he shared a substantial opening partnership with local favourite Stephen Moore.

Denly, who scored 123 in the County Championship at Tunbridge Wells last month, hit 66 as Australia's bowlers toiled in an opening stand of 172.

The partnership was finally broken when Denly fell to Brett Lee at the start of a devastating spell.

The seamer, who went into the game needing a good performance to nail a place in the Test side, took five wickets to rip out the Lions' top order.

Denly returns to Kent for the County Championship game with Surrey at The Oval, which begins on Friday.

Catch up with all the latest Kent news with GLENN PEARSON every week in KENT ON SUNDAY

SUPERBIKES
Byrne shaken but not stirred over his team's promises **85**

CRICKET
Kent keen to speak to Worcestershire seam bowler **87**

King's staying put

SIMON King has penned a new contract with Gillingham to keep him at Priestfield until 2012.

The 26-year-old (pictured) still had a year to run on his previous deal, but manager Mark Stimson was keen to tie him down for longer.

King has been outstanding since joining from Barnet for £200,000 in 2007, and was a key player in the club's promotion last season.

Stimson said: "If the club is going to go forward we need players like Simon, he's been absolutely outstanding."

Bowlers lead Kent into second spot

KENT moved to second in Division Two of the County Championship after a thrilling 76-run win against league leaders Gloucestershire.

Rob Key's side went into the final day's play on Friday needing to take a further five wickets, and despite a valiant unbeaten 61 from 49 balls from tail-ender Jon Lewis, Kent's bowlers, led by Azhar Mahmood and James Tredwell, gave them their third championship victory.

Martin van Jaarsveld top scored in Kent's first innings of 231 on a lively Beckenham wicket that had enough to interest the bowlers, but also looked a good batting strip. Simon Cook with 5 for 22 and Tredwell's 3 for 52 then helped Kent take a lead of 65 into their second innings after the leaders were bowled out for 166.

Vice-captain van Jaarsveld again top scored with 62 for Kent, but it was a 10th-wicket partnership of 87 between Cook (40 not out) and Ryan McLaren (42) that proved pivotal.

Azhar Mahmood struck late on the third day to halt any Gloucestershire hopes of chasing down 331 for victory and he went on to claim superb figures of 5 for 39 in only his second championship game of the summer.

Tredwell claimed seven wickets in the game after taking 4 for 84 and was delighted with his effort on a helpful Beckenham track.

He said: "I suppose you could say it's a typical Beckenham wicket as it's got a bit of bounce and swung a bit at times and there was a bit of turn and bounce for the spinner as well.

"It's that sort of wicket you are never really in on as a batter."

• Martin van Jaarsveld is reportedly being tracked by Yorkshire as he is out of contract at the end of the season.

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HOUSE GRABS SHOCK TITLE

Kent rider clinches GB road race jersey

By **DAVID PRITCHARD**

KRISTIAN House is not expecting anything to change despite beating several household names to win cycling's National Road Race Championships last weekend.

The relatively unheralded 29-year-old, who grew up in Canterbury, shocked a high-class field to take the title in a thrilling race in Wales.

Tour de France star Mark Cavendish and Olympic champion Bradley Wiggins were among those left trailing in his wake following a perfectly-timed sprint finish in Abergavenny.

Although House had won races all over the world during his career, none compare in profile to becoming national champion.

But despite his success, the Rapha Condor rider is not anticipating a sudden influx of offers to compete in the world's biggest races.

Apology

He told Kent on Sunday: "It's by far the highlight of my career – the biggest win and the most special one.

"You dream about it for years and it's been a bit overwhelming.

"[But] it doesn't change anything. I will wear the jersey and I'm the national champion for a year, but I don't automatically become team leader or get special rights because I've won.

"My ambitions have always been much the same. If I got an opportunity and it's right I might take it, but I'm happy with the team I'm in. You can't think about that too much. I did that for years and you drive yourself nuts."

The build-up to the race had focused on the unusually high quality of the field riding in the 104-mile championship. Cavendish, Wiggins and David Millar were all using the event to fine-tune their fitness ahead of the Tour de France, which started yesterday.

After the race, Cavendish, who emerged as one of the world's best sprinters after an incredible four stage wins in last year's Tour, criticised House for not doing his share of the work in the breakaway which set him up for victory.

House, who spent a decade in the United States as a child, is not fazed by the comments, particularly as Cavendish was not in the lead group to see the race's climax.

"Cav wears his heart on his sleeve – he says things before he thinks about them," he said.

"He had a go at me in the race and then quickly apologised for it – we've been mates for years. I was a bit mystified why he said what he did afterwards, but things are said immediately after a race which you don't mean. It doesn't bother me."

House's rise to fame is well timed, with cycling enjoying a renaissance in the UK.

On the back of Cavendish's continued success, including March's victory in the Milan-San Remo classic, plus the outstanding performances of Team GB at the Beijing Olympics, the new national champion has noticed a discernible spike in interest.

He said: "The success in the Olympics and what Cav did in the Tour really is pushing the profile of cycling up in this country. Domestic events are on TV a lot more and it's really generating a lot of interest in the sport."

Whether House can capitalise on his success remains to be seen. In the short term he will remain on the periphery, clearly demonstrated by his schedule this month.

While the Tour de France attracts a global audience, the British champion will be riding in a stage race in China at altitude.

Picture: GETTY IMAGES

RIDE ON TIME: House won national title